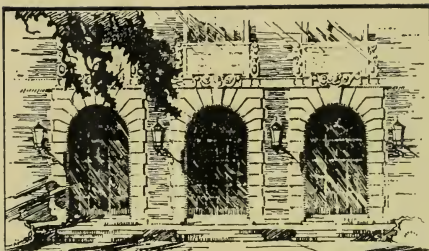







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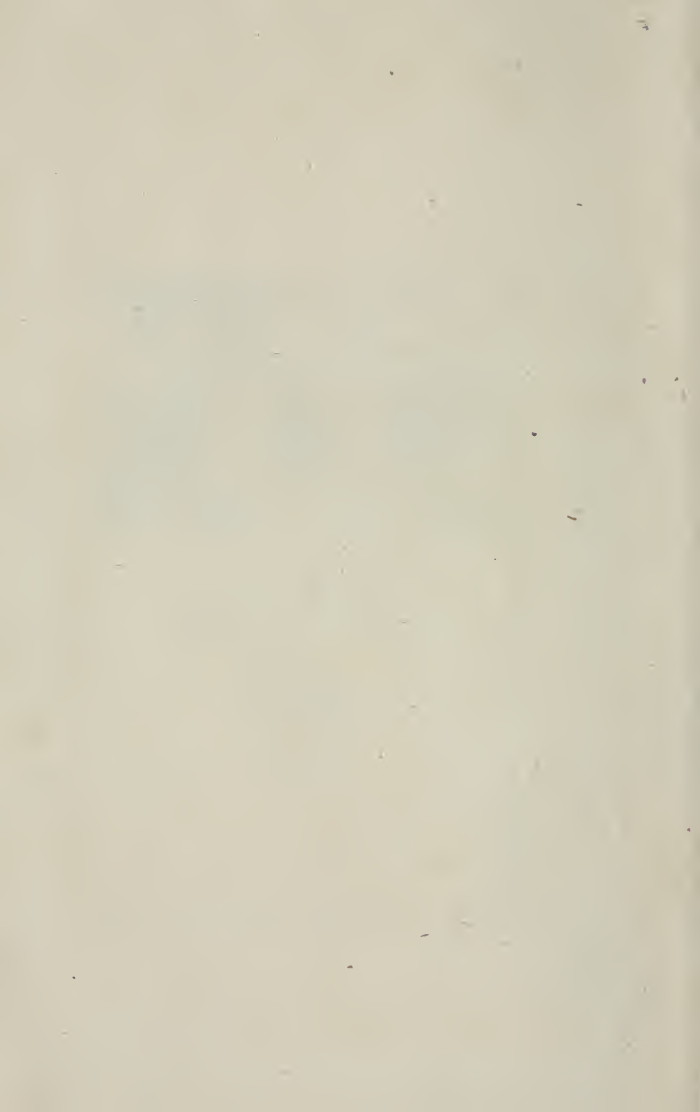


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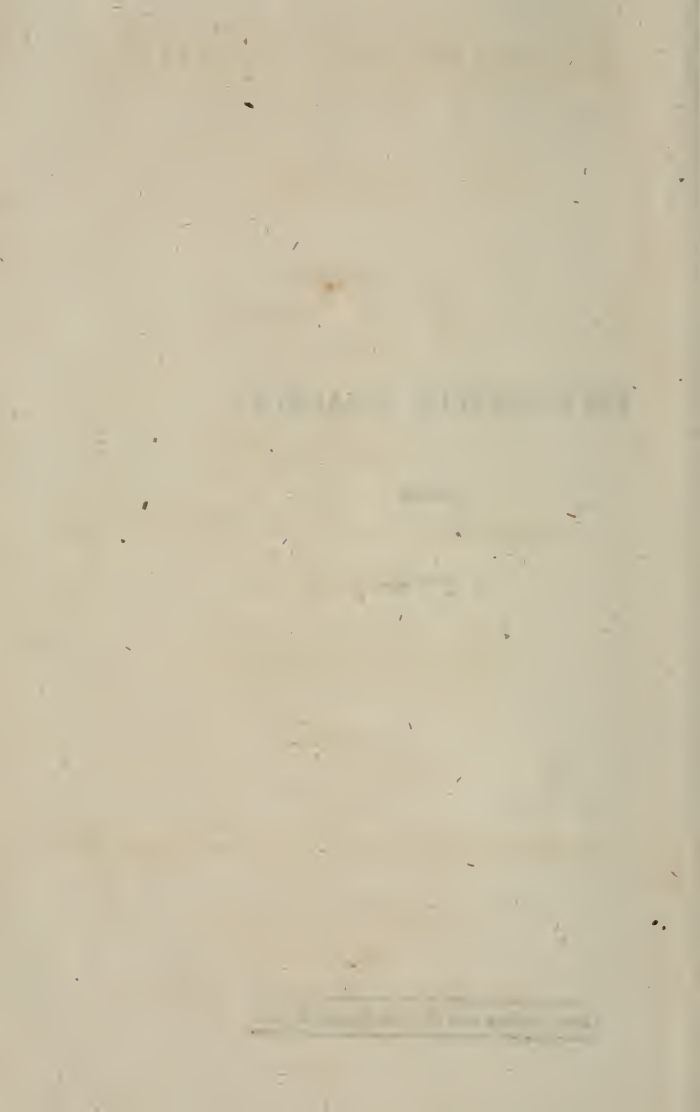


LANGHTON PRIORY.



A NOVEL.

Lane, Darling and Co. Leadenhall-Street.



LANGHTON PRIORY.

A NOVEL.

—•••••—
IN FOUR VOLUMES.

—•••••—
BY
GABRIELLI,

AUTHOR OF
MYSTERIOUS WIFE, MYSTERIOUS HUSBAND, &c. &c.

What though Religion's guardians taint her tide!
Pure's the fountain, though the stream flows wide!
Too oft her erring guides her cause betray:
Yet Rage grows impious when it bars her way.

—•••••—

VOL. IV.

LONDON:
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LEADENHALL-STREET.

1809.

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LANGHTON PRIORY.

CHAP. I.

LADY Winifred was not at home, our hero was informed; but as he saw the Countess of Algernon's carriage was in waiting, he went up stairs, and found her *tête-à-tête* with Rosalie. Miss Albany was gone into the city, his sister told him; and her Ladyship was gone to pay a formal visit to a maiden lady of her own age, which had induced her to leave her at home.

"And as I found her alone," said the Countess, "I resolved, as I hope you mean

to do, to remain with her till the old lady returned; as Lady Win is very much hurt at her ward's evident predilection for St. Mary Axe; and I own it rather astonished me, as the girl does not seem to want for pride: but her mother may have many amiable qualities, and she may find herself under less restraint in her house than she does here. But, as I do not wish to inquire into her reasons for preferring her mother's company to my aunt's, tell me how you found the lovely Zara, and how you like the boasted villa, which will soon, I make no doubt, vie with B—— House?"

"If the General does but live long enough, he will render it an absolute terrestrial Paradise," was the reply.

"Still I wish he would resolve to spend another month in town," said Rosalie, "as I am afraid I shall see but little of his daughter when he takes possession of this superb abode, as I dare say he will never suffer her to leave home."

"I will

“ I will take you with me when I pay my respects to him,” said the Marquis.

“ He will forbid you his house in another month, Endermay,” cried the Countess, “ except you make proposals for Miss Umfreville; and, he will serve you right, if you do let such a prize slip through your fingers. But, like all the Lords of the creation, you cannot make up your mind to part with your liberty, because you fancy you can have a lovely girl for asking.”

“ Now, my dear aunt, is not that being very severe upon our sex?”

“ By no means. Were there a thousand obstacles in your way, you would be dying for Zara Umfreville; but as her father is ready to request your acceptance of her, and she, dear girl, does not absolutely hate you, you are not inclined to be happy at so easy a rate.”

“ You positively wrong me, aunt; and that you may not think I waited for your remonstrances to do Miss Umfreville justice,

I this very morning preferred my humble petition to her father; and if she does not absolutely reject my suit, before the expiration of three months I may perhaps entreat you to present her at St. James's, as Marchioness of Endermay."

"My dear brother," cried the enraptured Rosalie, "thus let me congratulate you and myself," kissing him repeatedly.

The Countess was no less pleased, and was desiring he would hasten the wedding, when Lady Winifred returned; who was soon informed of our hero's intentions. She participated in his aunt's and sister's joy; and after renewing their congratulations, and making him promise to sup in Portland-place, they suffered him to depart, agreeing not to mention his intended marriage, except to the Earl, till he was really an accepted lover.

To Dr. Campbell our hero was equally unreserved; and he was no less delighted at his having made so prudent a choice, as he was ready to prognosticate that he
would

would be the happiest of men. And, between seven and eight, our hero proceeded to the General's, who was in the drawing-room with Mrs. Glover, and seemed at least ten years younger than when they first met in the morning. Having expressed his joy to see his future son-in-law, he told him that Zara had retired when his carriage stopped, "that she might have you all to herself, I suppose," he continued; "so go and settle matters with her in the next room. Let her know, Glover—as we must attend to etiquette before marriage—that the Marquis requests a few minutes private audience."

While the governess was gone to execute her commission, the General said, in a gay tone, "We must humour the girl a little now; they all expect it upon these occasions; and as their reign is but short, I wish them to enjoy their triumph; since, when once they have vowed obedience, the man is a fool who does not make them practise it."

Our hero made no reply to this kind advice ; and was very happy when he found himself *tête-à-tête* with his lovely mistress. And though doubtless his declaration might have served as a model to all future novel-writers, upon such important occasions, as he spoke the language of his heart, we shall not dwell upon it, nor upon his raptures when his suit was modestly accepted ; since, had the fair Zara been allowed to chuse her future liege lord, she would have selected the young Highlander, whom she was well assured was actuated by love alone, as he did not want her father's money, and might have chosen a wife among the daughters of his few superiors in point of rank. Having spent near an hour with her, he returned to the General, who sent Glover, as he always called her, to keep Zara company, presuming she would not wish to join the party that evening ; telling her to send them in some tea and coffee, and not to let them be disturbed, as he had many things to talk over with Lord Endermay.

may. She was of course all obedience; and while the Nabob was declaring he was the happiest of men, she was congratulating her dear pupil upon her happy prospects; but chose to carry in the tea and coffee to the gentlemen, who were neither of them sorry when she left them *tête-à-tête*, as the General was all anxiety to set the lawyers to work, and to have his daughter married out of hand; requesting, upon second thoughts, that the Marquis would leave every thing to him, as he fancied he could deal best with the gentlemen of the long robe. Our hero assured him he had no objection, mentioning what his income was, and what jointure he thought would be proper for the Marchioness of Endermay.

“Leave every thing to me: I will not put too much power into my daughter’s hands. A certain sum for pin-money she must have; and if she exceeds that, refuse to pay her debts. She has behaved extremely well as a daughter; and it will be

your fault if she does not behave as well as a wife."

The Marquis found it would be useless to attempt to argue with this overbearing man, who was fearful his daughter should ever fancy she was an independent being. He therefore quietly acquiesced in his wish, to have the settlements drawn under his own inspection; merely requesting he would henceforth suffer Miss Umfreville to visit the females of his family, and to accompany them now and then into public.

"I do not care where she goes in your company, Marquis; all I feared was, that if you had not proposed for her, some foolish fop, like your cousin Dunluce, might have talked nonsense to her; and girls, even the wisest of them, are soon inclined to listen to love-tales: but as it will now be known that she is engaged, I do not think even the most dashing buck of fashion dare to attempt to rival you; and if they were so silly, the girl loves you, and that
is

is a sufficient security for her treating them with the contempt they deserve. So henceforth she is at your orders; and I shall always be glad to see your sister—Faith, I wish I was young again, for her sake; for I never saw a young woman more to my taste. Your brother does not seem to belong to the family. I think it is very fortunate he is a Catholic, as he would never have appeared to advantage as a public character.”

Our hero agreed that Nature had not been very bountiful to him; but, as it grew late, took his leave, and drove into Portland-place; where he found Lady Winifred and Rosalie, who had stopped supper, on purpose to hear whether he was accepted by the lovely Zara. Lord Dunluce was not at home; and they all congratulated him upon having, they were well convinced, secured his own happiness. The Earl declared he had also done a very charitable action, in releasing so fair a damsel from such an irksome state of thralldom. The Countess de-

clared her intention of paying Miss Umfreville a visit the next morning; and Lady Winifred agreed to be of the party. Rosalie hoped her brother would not object to her mentioning his approaching marriage to her mother.

“ So far from it, my dear girl, that I desire you do it in my name, and request she would impart the intelligence to Mr. Langhton, and to any of her friends, as I am too proud of my choice to wish to keep my intentions a secret.”

At a late hour the party separated: and, during the following week, our hero divided his time between his favourite *protégée*, who almost rivalled the lovely Zara in his esteem, the General's, and his kind uncle's; nor did he absolutely neglect Lady Winifred. The Nabob also found full employment in superintending the improvements at the villa, and in giving instructions to his lawyers respecting his daughter's settlements. Of course, the Marquis saw very little of Algernon, who
had

had called twice in Arlington-street, when he was from home ; but he rather presumed he did not lead a very secluded life, as Rosalie told him, in confidence, that her mother was rather uneasy about him, as he had wrote to her, to request a farther supply of cash for his private expences ; alledging, that he was obliged to appear like other folks, and to play high at his relations' houses. Now, as Rosalie had never seen him touch a card at either Lord Derwent's, the Earl's, or in Arlington-street, she feared he had some other, and more private, calls for money. So thought our hero, who fancied some of his *speculations* were of rather an expensive nature, as he learnt by mere accident, that Lord Algernon, thinking his son had led him into some extravagances, had made him a présent of a hundred pounds, to prevent his being under the necessity of applying to Mr. Langhton ; and as Belthorpe paid for their board and lodging, and he had not expended any large sum in clothes, the

Marquis did not think himself very uncharitable in supposing him addicted to some low expensive vices, which thus drained his pocket.

On the Saturday evening after our hero had become the declared lover of the fair East Indian, he had the pleasure of accompanying her to the Opera, which, it may be supposed, she greatly enjoyed. They went into Lady Algernon's box, who was, of course, as well as Rosalie, of the party; and as it had already been whispered in the fashionable world, that Lord Endermay was upon the eve of marriage, his bride-elect excited general notice. The newspapers, as usual, informed the public of their approaching nuptials; and the General was not a little flattered, at having his former gallant actions noticed, and his fortune greatly exaggerated. His daughter's beauty was also highly extolled; and even his villa was noticed. Of course, he no longer dreaded not being known, and was resolved to give a most superb *fête*, in honour of
his

his daughter's marriage, when his retreat was embellished to his mind; and the season was more favourable to *al fresco* diversions. As he generally drove to his villa every morning, he often left his daughter at home, to receive her lover, who not unfrequently drove her out in his curricule; or else Lady Algernon or Lady Winifred Albany called for her, and took her into Hyde Park or Kensington Gardens, as both were soon very much attached to her, and felt extremely anxious to contribute to her comfort and amusement. Algernon alone envied his brother, telling Belthorpe, "That it was a fine thing to be a Lord. They had only to ask, and have; every pretty girl was ready to jump down their throat." Old Madame de La Tour could see much to admire in a titled man; and it was high treason to find fault with a great man, even in his grandfather Langhton's opinion; and as for all his grand relations, they hardly seemed to notice him, while they had all a fine speech and a smile for his titled brother."

Belthorpe

Belthorpe comforted him, by observing, that he might either look down upon them, or cut with them, when he became master of Langhton Priory.

But as he feared his mother might live to the age of his grandfather, this was sorry comfort, in his opinion. Still he had the policy to pay the Marquis a congratulatory visit; and as our hero gave him credit for a better heart than he possessed, he received him very cordially, mentally resolving to continue his friend, let what would be the issue of the appeal to the Father with respect to Juliano, whom he longed to introduce, as his brother, to the General and his daughter; but dared not as yet even mention him to Zara, with whom he was of course frequently *tête-à-tête*; and one morning, during the second week of his courtship, as he was sitting with her, in Harley-street, waiting the return of the General, who was, as usual, gone down to the villa, after a momentary hesitation, she said, “ You are so totally free from what
my

my mother used to denominate false pride, Marquis, that I wish to consult you respecting a commission with which she entrusted me, during her last moments; and I have hitherto been prevented from fulfilling her injunctions, as my father is not privy to the circumstance."

"Then suffer me to become your ambassador, if that is compatible with your wish, to perform so sacred a duty, since you cannot oblige me more than by putting it in my power to be of service to you. I am but too well aware of the restraint you have long been under; but, believe me, ere long you shall not have a wish ungratified: so now favour me with your promised communication."

"My mother, who was one of the best and most amiable of women, as you would have said had you known her, my dear friend, had a relation, an aunt—in short, whose husband, like my grandfather, was in a very great mercantile line, in London. The failure of the one shook the credit of the

the other; who also, in the end, became a bankrupt; and though they satisfied their creditors, they were reduced to the greatest distress. She wrote to my poor mother, as she corresponded with her when she first went to India."

The tears, which she had vainly endeavoured to disperse, and which were a just tribute to her exemplary parent's memory, now stole down her cheeks. The Marquis, without affecting to notice her distress, raised her hand to his lips, saying, "Go on, my love. You have greatly interested me in favour of this relation; and no one with whom you are at all connected shall linger out their days in poverty, while we have such ample means to provide for their wants."

Having dried her tears, she thanked him for what she termed so convincing a proof of his regard; and thus proceeded—"My mother had, from a child, been extremely attached to her aunt, with whom she frequently spent a month at a time, as Mr.

Pomfret.

Pomfret was also exceeding fond of her, and was a most excellent as well as very pleasant man. Like my grandfather, he did not long survive his bankruptcy, and left a widow, in very narrow circumstances, and an only daughter. It was therefore very natural, that Mrs. Pomfret should state her situation to my mother, in hopes that my father would afford her some assistance, as they had helped to fit my mother out when she went to India, and had sent her various presents for me, before Mr. Pomfret broke. My father did not, however, happen to be in a good humour when my mother communicated my aunt's letter to him, and would have it that Mr. Pomfret's folly and extravagance had been the occasion of his ruin, added to his wife's bad management; and finally desired her not to notice such a begging letter; the old woman might suppose it had miscarried; and, at all events, she had both relations and friends in England, who doubtless would, if she was deserving their notice, provide.

provide for her wants. I need not tell you, that the General can be arbitrary; therefore, not from want of charity, I dare believe, but perhaps because Mrs. Pomfret had not addressed her petition directly to him, he forbid my mother holding any communication with her in future. Conceiving, however, that he had rather overstepped the bounds of his authority, Mrs. Umfreville did venture, through the medium of the captain of a homeward-bound Indiaman, to send her aunt a trifle, to provide for her immediate wants; and, while she lived, she generally sent her a small sum annually, which she was requested never to acknowledge; and I am sure it is the only concealment my mother ever had from my father; and I know it made her very miserable at times, to be rolling in wealth herself, and to have such near relations in what might be termed real distress, without having it in her power to relieve them. But, upon her death-bed—"she paused, and wiped her eyes—" she con-
jured

jured me, if ever I went to England, and had it in my power, to seek out her poor aunt, and assist her to the utmost of my power, which, should I marry well, might not be so very limited as her's had always been. She also entrusted me with her last savings, and a few trinkets, which she did not suppose my father would miss, when he examined her jewels, as they were most of them presents and keep-sakes from her European friends; and indeed she might have been more generous then, without fearing to irritate my father, who grieved too seriously for her loss to examine any of her drawers or jewel-cases after she died. As he gave me every thing it was not thought right to distribute among her immediate attendants, I have therefore been able to add a trifle to her bequest; and if, through your means, I could but learn where she resides——”

“I will find her out, if she is in England,” interrupted our hero, not contented this time with kissing the lovely Zara's hand. “As
sincerely

sincerely do I rejoice to find you have inherited all your mother's benevolence. But where did Mrs. Pomfret reside when she last addressed your sainted mother, who was, I am convinced, a martyr to your father's—what shall I term it?—want of feeling, for every one but himself; surely that is not too harsh an expression?"

"He is a military man, you know; and he generally attributes his peremptory commands to that cause."

"Then I wonder you were not afraid to venture upon a soldier, my dear girl."

"I fancy I loved you before I recollected that circumstance. Besides, your servants do not seem to stand in the same awe of you ours do of my father; and yet you seem to be better served. But here is Mrs. Pomfret's last letter to my mother," taking one out of her pocket-book; "it is of an ancient date—1788; but pray read it. I am sure it will interest you in her favour."

He did so, and was convinced that the writer possessed a very superior mind, and
had

had received a very good education, as her situation was pathetically described, and appearing to judge General Umfreville after her own heart, she seemed to make no doubt of his advancing the small sum she required, to put her in a way to provide for herself and child ; and never had the Nabob stood so low in his estimation, since he had been more than imprudent and extravagant himself, having squandered away a noble fortune in the most shameful way ; and owing to his having given way to every vice that could degrade a man, his friends had then sent him out to India, at no trifling expence, or he must have ended his days in a prison ; and he had been extremely fortunate, which had evidently hardened his heart, since he could not resolve even to bestow a trifle upon so near a relation of his wife's, whose indigence was the consequence of misfortune, not of vice ; yet he seemed to fancy himself a good man, and that he had of late done his duty towards God and his fellow-creatures. Surely riches
were

were sent, as to Sir Balaam, as a temptation to sin, when they were merely employed to pamper the appetite, and flatter the vanity of their possessor. Indeed, he was almost tempted to believe, that the General's boasted hoards would never prosper in his hands. He was, however, resolved to devote a great part of them to charitable purposes, since his own income would more than suffice to satisfy all his wants, even as a married man, and he was convinced Zara had not a taste for expence. Such were his reflections while perusing Mrs. Pomfret's letter, which was dated' No. —, Upper-street, Islington, whither she had removed, upon her husband's death, and where she proposed letting lodgings, to enable her to pay the rent and taxes.

“ I will ride to Islington to-morrow morning, my dear girl; and I make no doubt of being able to trace either her or her daughter, should they, as it is very probable, have removed; and when I have found her, we will wait upon her together,
and

and you may then promise to settle a sufficient annuity upon her, to place her above want."

"Let that be a future consideration, my dear Malcolm," as the Marquis had requested she would style him. "With your leave, I will entrust you with my mother's bequest. I have it in my writing-desk," going to fetch it. She soon returned, saying, "I had resolved to address you upon the subject by letter; but I had so much to say, and so much to explain, I preferred telling you my wishes; though I would not have troubled you to seek the poor soul out, dare I have given the commission to any of our servants; but I was even afraid to inquire of them whether Islington was near London; and had I applied to Rosalie, I guessed that she would have pressed you into the service, so I thought I might as well apply to you in the first instance. But now my mind will be at ease," putting the packet into his hands; "and when you have seen the poor soul,

as

as I will suppose she is living, we can settle what I ought to do to insure her future comfort."

"Agreed, my dear girl; and to-morrow——" The stopping of the General's carriage, who was coming home to dinner, made him pause. He then added, "Thank God we were not sooner interrupted, as we must listen to the wonderful improvements which are going forward at the villa." And he would have added, as he mentally exclaimed, with our celebrated bard, while the proud Nabob was alighting from his elegant equipage,

"Take physic, pomp;

Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel,

That thou mayst shake the superflux to them,

And shew the Heavens more just."

CHAP. II.

THE following morning, as soon as he had breakfasted, our hero ordered his horses, and, telling Dr. Campbell where he was going, proceeded to Islington. Not wishing to make himself known, he dismounted near the Angel, where he ordered his groom to walk the horses about till his return; and proceeded along what he presumed was the Upper-street. Upon inquiring, he found he was near half a mile from the row in which Mrs. Pomfret did or had resided; but had no difficulty, when he reached it, in finding the house. Having knocked at the door, he was told no such person lived

there then; and the present tenants could not say whether she ever had, as they had succeeded a Mr. Jenkins, who had left the house at Michaelmas. The Marquis thought it possible she might have removed, in consequence of not receiving the expected support from the General, or that she might have died soon after she addressed her niece, whose subsequent remittances had been pocketed by those to whom they had been entrusted. Yet this was forming a very rash judgment, he reflected, as they might have taken receipts for the money, which, unknown to her husband, they might have transmitted to Mrs. Umfreville. At last it occurred to him, that the landlord of the house might be able to afford him some information. He therefore requested to know where he resided?

“At No. —, not more than a hundred yards farther on,” he was informed.

Thither, therefore, he proceeded; and having inquired whether Mr. Porter was at home? he was answered in the affirmative
by

by a little dirty girl, who opened the door.
“ Could he speak to him?”

“ Yes, sure, Sir; please to walk into the counting-house.”

Since, though merely dressed for riding, and certainly not better than many merchants clerks, whom she was in the daily habit of seeing, there was an inborn dignity about the hero of our tale, which never failed to impress his inferiors with a certain degree of respect; he had besides spoken so civilly to the girl, she was convinced he was a real gentleman; and the lower classes have a sort of instinctive knowledge of this kind, which seldom leads them into mistakes.

The counting-house was a small back parlour; and at a deal desk facing the door sat a swarthy little fellow, about fifty, turning over some papers, who, after staring his visitor full in the face, with his hat on, and without moving, notwithstanding the Marquis had taken off his, inquired, in a con-

sequential tone, "What is your business with me, Sir?"

Convinced that he was not in the company of a gentleman, nor even of a civil tradesman, our hero, wishing to set him a good example, said, in a polite tone, "I was informed, at No. —, that you were the owner of that house."

"Well, Sir, what of that?" interrupted Mr. Porter.—"I am the owner of No. —, and of a pretty many more houses in this neighbourhood; but I have never a one empty at present."

"For your sake, Sir, I am happy to hear it; but I did not trouble you to inquire for a house, but merely to ask, whether a Mrs. Pomfret, a widow, did not reside in the one I mention, some years ago?"

"Pomfret—widow," he repeated, in a growling under-tone—"I believe she might. But what of that?—troubling me with inquiries about people who have left the neighbourhood these score years—do folks

folks suppose I keep a register of my tenants? I might have work enough if I did."

"I dare say you might," mentally exclaimed our hero, who, unwilling to depart without some information, begged his pardon for having troubled him upon so frivolous an occasion; but he had important reasons for wishing to learn where Mrs. Pomfret now resided.

"That may be; but what is that to me, I should like to know? Perhaps you are one of her rich relation's children, come from India. I should not wonder; for I have heard the old woman boast now and then of having a nephew or niece, married very grand."

"Then, as it seems you are acquainted with her, Sir, you would greatly oblige me, could you direct me where to find her?"

"How should I know, any more than you? I remember her very well. She left my house, because she was not punctual in her payments. She had agreed to pay

quarterly, and then she could only pay one quarter under another; and I must have tenants who are punctual to the day, else they don't suit me. However, I believe she was a very harmless good kind of an old woman, as times go. It was one of her great cronies who used to crack about her having great relations, and having kept her carriage; for Mrs. Pomfret was a woman of few words, mighty shy and reserved. When she left my house, she paid me my rent; and I took no farther account of her: but her old crony, whom I was mentioning, who keeps a little haberdasher's shop, a few doors below where she once lived, may be able to tell you where she went to. If she cannot, I do not know who can. I have four new houses in hand, which will be ready to come into in three months; so if you should want one at that time, why, as you seem a good kind of a young man, I shall not be against treating with you; but, not to give you unnecessary trouble, why, I will tell you now, that I shall not
let

let them under sixty guineas a-year—I always require guineas; other people talk of pounds; who ever thinks of the odd shillings? and, besides, I require my tenants to pay both the land and property-tax—no drawbacks out of my money; and if they do not pay their rent by twelve o'clock on quarter-days, why, they must take the consequence; for I have a brother an attorney, and I often help him to a job."

Having gained all the information he required, and feeling both shocked and provoked at hearing a man thus boast of overreaching and tormenting his fellow-creatures, the Marquis, with honest warmth, exclaimed, "I am only sorry you can boast of having a single tenant, since you are truly undeserving of Fortune's favours. Mrs. Pomfret, you must have known, had fallen from the grasp of affluence; and, I make no doubt, you severely made her feel having been unfortunate. She said no more than the truth, if she did boast of having

rich and powerful relations. They have sent me in search of her, as they are, as you supposed, just arrived in England; and had she been in your's, or any other person's debt, I came authorised to discharge them."

"Z—ds, Sir, did you come here with your Canterbury tales, to insult me in my own house!" cried the unfeeling, avaricious, purse-proud being, starting from his chair, and endeavouring to intimidate our hero by the fierceness of his looks—"By God, Sir, I shall insist upon knowing who you are," starting forward, and placing himself in the door-way.

Angry as he felt, the Marquis could not restrain a smile, while he said, "I do not think, Mr. Carpenter and Builder, you would be much gratified, were I to favour you with my address, since such insolent fellows as yourself are generally very humble in the presence of their superiors. That you are an unfeeling scoundrel, you have yourself acknowledged, since you are ready and
anxious

anxious to take every advantage of those who are unfortunate enough to have any dealings with you."

"A scoundrel, am I?"

"Yes, an unfeeling scoundrel; and I will tell you so before fifty people, if you chuse; and then inform you who I am, that you may afford your brother employment, since you can certainly go to law with every advantage."

Now, it so happened, that two men chanced to be at this time in the passage, and as our hero stood facing the master of the house, and the door was wide open, he had perceived the fellows, whom he presumed were journeymen, peeping in turns; and, to judge from their looks, they were not a little amused by what they saw and heard.

"Very well, Sir! mighty well, young man!" cried the furious carpenter—"But you shall not call me a rogue in my own house with impunity, if there is any law in the land."

“ Hold, Sir,” cried the Marquis ; “ I did not call you rogue. I merely said you were a scoundrel ; and I repeat my words. There are two men in the passage, probably in your employ, who must hear what I say ; therefore I tell you again, that I think you a most unfeeling, worthless being, notwithstanding your boasted number of houses ; and a little, since your stature does not admit of your being a great, scoundrel. So now let me pass.”

“ May I be d—d if I do,” was the reply ; and having turned his head, when the Marquis mentioned the two men, he called to them, desiring them to bear witness that he had been most grossly insulted by a total stranger, in his own house, who had called him everything but a gentleman.

“ Why, if that be all, Sir,” replied one of them, with a droll look, “ I do not know what to say ;” which struck our hero as so ridiculous, that he burst out a-laughing, and the two men joined in his mirth.

“ Why,

“Why, you d—d rascals,” cried the enraged master, “how dare you laugh at me, and set such an example to this impudent fellow, who may have come to rob me, for any thing I know to the contrary, as all thieves are dressed like gentlemen now-a-days?”

“Well,” answered the greatest offender, “this is only charge for charge. I don’t scruple to say I have heard the gentleman call you a scoundrel; and you have retaliated, by calling him a rogue, or as good: as to which of you are most in the right, I cannot pretend to say; I only know you are a d—d bad master, and I desire you will pay me my wages, when I am off; but I will come forward, at any time, in a court of justice, to tell what I have heard; but if I might advise, you would let the stranger gentleman pass, for your damages won’t exceed a farthing, and that is more than you are worth.”

This fresh insult rendered Mr. Porter all but raving; and, to mend the matter, the

little dirty drab of a girl already mentioned, who had stuffed her dirty woollen apron into her mouth, to keep from laughing out, took a peep between the two men, thus encreasing their mirth, and her master's fury, who swore he would soon rid the house of the whole kit of them. But, as he was now anxious to be gone, the Marquis advanced, saying, "Am I to pass you or not?"

Swearing a most violent oath, the little fellow vowed he should remain where he was, till he had had satisfaction.

"Satisfaction!" repeated our amused hero, in a most ludicrous tone: "Pray what are your weapons? sword or pistol?"

The men and the girl now roared with laughter, nay even held their sides; while the more and more enraged master swore they should all smart for it; he would set his brother upon their back; he would make them laugh on the wrong side of their mouths. But having, in his fury, moved on one side, our hero passed him, and had just

just stepped without the street-door, when Mr. Porter caught him by the flap of his coat, saying, "You are not gone yet; I will know where you are to be found, before you leave this spot, as I will make you, as well as these grinning scoundrels, smart for your insolence towards me."

This was exactly what our hero expected, and rather wished, since this was commencing the assault in the open street. He had his riding-whip in his hand, which he now laid about the little fellow's shoulders most handsomely, saying, "At all events, you shall smart first;" and having given him half a dozen stripes, with all his might, he ceased, saying, "There, scoundrel—for I repeat my words—now have recourse to the laws of your country. There is my address," tearing off the cover of a letter which he happened to have about him.

To find he was a titled man rather startled the builder; while his servants and neighbours, who had been extremely amused by the discipline he had undergone, were not less

less anxious to know who had treated him so exactly according to his deserts. They therefore crowded round Mr. Porter; and before our hero was out of hearing, he heard his name repeated by several of the bystanders, several of whom exclaimed, "It is the nobleman who brought the dispatches from Egypt last year."

He however contrived, unobserved, to slip into the haberdasher's shop, to which Mr. Porter had directed him. The mistress was sitting in her little back parlour; and as he was fearful he might be followed, or that, should he be seen in the shop, curiosity might induce many idlers to assemble, either to applaud or condemn his late conduct, he stepped forward, saying, "Excuse me, Ma'am," taking a seat out of sight of the door; "but I have been told you are the only person likely to afford me any information respecting Mrs. Pomfret, who resided at No. —, not many years since?"

"No apology is necessary, Sir," was the reply. "Mrs. Pomfret you inquired after

—yes,

—yes, I can direct you to her. We are old friends, and have both seen better days; and I may add, I have been the most fortunate in the long run. She took to letting lodgings, poor soul; and I removed into this bit of a shop, as I understood the business, having once kept one of the first shops in this line in Cheapside; but it a'nt given to every one to succeed: and the more crosses and losses one meets with in this world, the more it prepares one for the next.—But I am running on about my own affairs, without allowing you time to inform me why you wish to see my old friend. Pray, who sent you to me?”

Our hero told her where he had been; but did not mention having quarrelled with Mr. Porter, merely saying, that he had told him she was the most likely person to give him the direction he sought.

“I only wonder that brute of a fellow was so civil. I dare say he rejoiced at exposing the poor soul's poverty, for I know,

know he has made his brags of having got rid of her just in time."

"He certainly struck me as being very devoid of feeling; and I must acknowledge, as I was tempted to tell him so, we did not part in friendship: but I hope he will be the better for my visit."

"He mend! my dear Sir—not he, truly; why, he glories in distressing his tenants, and is always at law with some one or other."

Not wishing to declare who he was to this good-meaning prating old woman, our hero requested she would inform him where Mrs. Pomfret then resided, as he was commissioned to seek her out by a distant relation, who had it in contemplation to place her at least above want.

"Then may God reward them, say I; for no one is more deserving of Fortune's favour, and yet she has hitherto been continually subject to her frowns; not owing to any fault or mismanagement of her own or her
late

late husband's, I give you my word: but first her brother, as good a man as ever broke bread, failed; that shook Mr. Pomfret; and in the end caused his failure; and he could not survive what he thought his disgrace. His widow then removed to Islington, where I was just settled; and when I tell you that my husband was in a manner ruined by Mr Pomfret's being made a bankrupt, you must suppose, since I remained friends with the widow, that the poor gentleman was more to be pitied than blamed; and, as I said, if his wife had followed him to the grave, as it was feared she would, I would have reared up his daughter, who should never have wanted bread, while I had it to give her. But, not to tire you, Sir, Mrs. Pomfret took to letting lodgings. She had hoped, that her niece's husband would have stood her friend in her distress; but he did not know her, and thought, as she supposes, that they had been reduced by their extravagance, which might harden his heart. However, her
niece

niece did all she could for her, I am well assured ; and she had worked her way uphill again, better than might have been expected. Her house was handsomely furnished ; and her daughter, who was a most industrious good girl, more than maintained herself with muslin-work. In short, both Mrs. Pomfret and she were so much liked and respected, that their house was never empty ; when it so chanced, as marriages are certainly made in Heaven, that a very decent well behaved young man, who had just set up in a very good line of business, at Lambeth, came up here for change of air, after a fever. He fell in love with Dolly ; and as he was very well to do in the world, they soon went to church together. I was at the wedding, and promised to stand for the first child. However, they prevailed upon my old friend to give up her house, as she could not have done without a servant, after her daughter married, and to go into lodgings near them ; when, about two years ago, owing to the war,

war, and the failure of some great house in the city, her son-in-law became a bankrupt, which almost broke Mrs. Pomfret's heart. She supported them to the last, till indeed she had scarcely anything left for herself, as, her daughter fretted and pined sadly, though she took to her old trade of muslin-working; but having two small children to look after, she could not get on as heretofore. Therefore, for the last two years, they have been much to be pitied, though Mrs. Pomfret has a few old friends, who still stand by her; and I for one will never see her reduced to crave assistance from the parish. Indeed, her son-in-law has turned out extremely well; for when he found all was gone, he very prudently looked out for work, and labours hard as a journeyman. He is a painter and glazier by trade; but he had something to do in the export line, which caused his failure. However, he soon got his certificate, and I do hope they will soon come round again; though he is obliged to toil early and late,

to.

to maintain four helpless people, as a body may say, for his wife is in a very weak state of health, therefore can earn but little; and my poor friend is too old and infirm to give them much assistance, and the eldest child is only four years old. But I think you told me, Sir, you came from a relation of Mrs. Pomfret's; therefore I hope you won't take it amiss my having stated her real situation."

"You have greatly obliged me, Mrs. Ryder," telling her from whom he came.

"From her niece's only daughter! She takes after her mother then, I will be bound. We knew Mrs. Umfreville was dead; and I am sure Mrs. Pomfret never expected to be noticed by General Umfreville's heiress. I have seen her late mother, when she was a child, at my friend's; and she was not more than a girl when she went out to India. I hope she was happy in her marriage-state; but I know Mrs. Pomfret had her doubts. However, she will rejoice very sincerely, when she finds she
has

has recommended her to her daughter's notice."

"Miss Umfreville is even anxious to see the good lady. I am the bearer of a few lines from her to Mrs. Pomfret, and a letter and small bequest from her late mother, to which I know she has made some addition. Had it been in her power, she would long since have sent the parcel to England; but she was not her own mistress, and had little or no intercourse with the resident Europeans while in India."

"I dare say not, poor young lady; for I have always heard the General was a very stern man. An East India captain gave him a strange character to my poor friend, who grieved very sincerely upon her niece's account. But pray, Sir, is the young lady as handsome as her mother?"

"As I never saw the late Mrs. Umfreville, I am no judge; but I should suppose so, as her daughter is one of the most beautiful girls in England, perhaps I might add in Europe; and, what is still better, she has
inherited

inherited all her mother's virtues, and her sweetness of temper."

"Thank God! I wish she may be happier in a husband; and I think she will, if I have guessed right; but that is neither here nor there. You are perhaps in haste, Sir—Do you know Lambeth?"

"I know where the Palace stands; but I never was there: and if you could have made it convenient to have accompanied me to Mrs. Pomfret's, I should have esteemed myself greatly obliged, as I shall find it very awkward to introduce myself to the old lady, and you could prepare her for the agreeable intelligence I have to communicate, if you preceded me thither. Therefore, if you cannot accompany me this morning, perhaps you can fix a time when you could, and I will call for you in a coach."

"One never ought to delay communicating good news, Sir; and I delight in having any to impart. My niece is only gone into the neighbourhood; when she returns,

returns, and I expect her every minute, I will put on my things, and accompany you."

Our hero thanked her for so readily acceding to his wishes; taking leave of her for the present, promising to return in a quarter of an hour in a coach, observing a stand at no great distance. She assured him she would be ready. He went to order his groom home. Upon approaching the Angel, he perceived he was in conversation with the carpenter's two men, whom he had so much amused at Mr. Porter's; and they were all three laughing so heartily, they were not aware of his approach, till he spoke to the servant. Bowing very submissively, they both retreated; the one who had cut up his master so freely hoping his Lordship would pardon them for having ventured to question his groom; "but after you were gone, my Lord Marquis, our rogue of a master swore the direction was all a take-in, and that you were no more a Lord than he was; so see-
ing

ing your servant, and knowing you were booted and spurred, why, we guessed who he belonged to; so I resolved to inquire; and we were just laughing at the nice dressing you gave the old rogue; for as to his prosecuting you for calling him scoundrel, he might as well threaten the whole village, for he is called as bad, or worse, to his face, every day of his life."

Putting a guinea into each of their hands, the Marquis desired them to inform Mr. Porter where they had seen his groom. Sending him home, he then went in search of a coach, in which he called for Mrs. Ryder, who was ready to attend him; and they set out for Lambeth; but having agreed not to drive up to the door, Mrs. Ryder ordered the coachman to take the first turning to the right after they crossed Westminster bridge, and to stop at the end of the street, telling her companion that they should then be within a few hundred yards of Mrs. Pomfret's. There, therefore, they alighted; and while our hero settled
with

with the coachman, she walked forward, after pointing out the row of houses round the corner, and as they were all regularly numbered, he could not mistake the door, though he was not to knock till she had made him the concerted signal. "Mrs. Pomfret occupied the first floor, or more properly, the front room, and an adjoining closet, in which her bed stood. Her daughter slept in the back room, as did the children; but they all lived together, and would have found themselves very comfortable," said Mrs. Ryder, "could they have been certain of keeping the wolf from the door."

Having turned the corner, the Marquis saw his companion enter the house she had pointed out to him, which stood in rather a pleasant situation, like all those in the row, as it faced a garden, or sort of nursery-ground. From the bills he perceived in several windows, he presumed most of the neighbours let lodgings, furnished or unfurnished: but having reached the extre-

mity of the row, he crossed to the paling which inclosed the nursery-ground ; and as he could look over it, he every now and then made a stop for that purpose, though it was too early in the spring for either trees or flowers to have assumed a verdant appearance. But as he could, from this distance, sooner see the proposed signal, he loitered the most nearly opposite Mrs. Pomfret's windows, towards which he frequently glanced his eyes, when, to his infinite surprise, at one next door, he caught a glimpse of a female face, which was not unknown to him, but who instantly retreated, upon perceiving she had excited his notice. For a few seconds he was lost in thought. " Could it be possible ! " he asked himself, moving forward a few paces, and again looking over the paling, then suddenly glancing his eyes round towards the same window. Again he caught sight of the same lady, hid behind a curtain, and evidently watching him ; and though he only saw her profile this time, he was convinced it was

Pauline

Pauline de La Tour, whom, as he had before suspected, must have preceded Algernon to London; and such a connexion perfectly accounted for his apparent extravagance, since, had she eloped with an officer from Preston, she would certainly not have taken up her abode at Lambeth; and Algernon and his complaisant tutor had doubtless moved their quarters to be near the young lady. While he was thus endeavouring to account for Pauline's appearance, having sauntered on a few yards, he perceived Mrs. Ryder making the proposed signal. He therefore instantly crossed the way. Presuming Mademoiselle was watching which way he went, he thought it not improbable she might suspect he either kept or met a mistress there. This gave him very little concern, though he felt grieved at Algernon's having thus verified his first conjectures. Mrs. Ryder let him in, telling him her poor old friend had been contending with all the varied feelings incident to human nature, as she had

felt her regret for her beloved niece revive, which had certainly served to temper the joy her other communications had occasioned her; and as a flood of tears had greatly relieved her bursting heart, she would not suffer the gentleman, who had so kindly sought her out, to remain in the cold; adding, "She is all alone, her daughter and the children being at Greenwich, with a relation of her husband's."

This passed as they proceeded along the passage, and ascended the stairs. Mrs. Pomfret gave the Marquis the meeting at her room door; and he was extremely struck with her interesting venerable countenance. She was rather tall, though bent by age and misfortune; and her dress, though of the most homely kind, was accurately neat, as was her apartment, which could not have been put in order for his reception. Her manners were those of a person who had mixed in genteel society; and her language was infinitely more refined than Mrs. Ryder's; having placed
him

him a chair, and expressed her thanks for the trouble he had taken, and for his kind precaution in having sent her friend forward to announce his intended visit, since, though she already knew that her niece was an angel in Heaven, she little expected to have been noticed by her daughter, who must have inherited all her excellent qualities. Our hero made an appropriate reply, and gratified his own feelings, by bestowing some very deserved eulogiums upon his beloved Zara, in whose name he presented her with the packet he had brought. Placing it upon a table that stood near her, she said, with a sigh, "I will examine it presently. May I inquire how the General and Miss Umfreville are?"

"The General is in a very indifferent state of health, Ma'am. His daughter was in excellent health yesterday; and when you have seen her, I am sure you will transfer to her the love you once bore her mother."

“ May the Almighty bless and reward her! I shall indeed rejoice to see her, though our circumstances——”

“ Nonsense!” cried Mrs. Ryder; “ are you the less respectable for being poor? So let us see what your poor niece has left you; and remember I prognosticate, that your latter days will, like Job’s, be more prosperous than your former ones. People who have never known either sorrow or poverty, cannot enjoy prosperity like those that have. So open your packet, to please me.—You must excuse me, Sir,” turning to our hero; “ but I am obliged to rouse my old friend now and then; as, having been what I call the most fortunate of the two, I have always had the greatest share of spirits—indeed, had I met with half the real misfortunes which have assailed her, I should have sunk under them years ago.”

While this kind-hearted old woman was thus running on, Mrs. Pomfret broke the seal of her parcel. The Marquis, who had felt

felt extremely interested for her, from the moment he had heard her story, had slipped a fifty pound note under the inside cover, and inclosed it in another sheet of blank writing-paper. The first thing, therefore, that caught the notice of Mrs. Ryder was this note falling upon the table, while her friend was unfolding the second cover.

“ Here is a beginning, at all events,” she exclaimed; “ and this must have been shoved in at the end, after the packet was sealed. Go on; there is something more behind, for this was an after-thought, and a very lucky one it was, for it is a fifty—God bless the donor!—why, ’tis enough to render you comfortable for a twelve-month.”

“ Indeed it is, and I may not live half that time,” cried the grateful Mrs. Pomfret, with streaming eyes, while she mentally returned thanks to Him from whom all good springs, “ though, bless God,” she resumed, “ my health is tolerably good.”

“ To be sure it is, and you may live to
 D 4 ninety,

ninety, and I to see it. This is no time for repining.—There now,” she went on, as Mrs. Pomfret had now completely unfolded her parcel, “this is truly, as we say to children, ‘shut your eyes, and see what God will send you;’ for never did anything arrive more *apropos*.”

A short letter from the late Mrs. Umfreville was at bottom; and her legacy consisted of about fifty pounds, in Indian gold coins, and various expensive trinkets, both of her’s and her daughter’s, to the amount of about a hundred more. Having wept over her beloved niece’s short letter, Mrs. Pomfret repeatedly called down blessings upon the head of her daughter, whom the Marquis delicately gave her to understand had added to her mother’s gifts; assuring her, that henceforth she would receive a hundred a-year from the same quarter, therefore requested she would seek out a more eligible abode, and endeavour to make herself perfectly comfortable.

“You are very good, Sir; but, I assure
you,

you, I am already very eligibly situated, for a person of my age; and it is both my duty and my inclination to assist my poor children. My friend has told you my short story, I understand; therefore I shall not trespass upon your time, by recapitulating my recent misfortunes, as I am convinced I shall never again feel the anguish of seeing my child drooping for want of proper nourishment, though all my friends have been more than kind towards us; and Mrs. Ryder here has often deprived herself of comforts, to administer to our necessities."

"I have only done as you would have acted by me, had you been in my place," cried Mrs. Ryder; "I was only grieved I had so little to offer."

"The widow's mite is always the most acceptable," rejoined our hero. "So now, Mrs. Pomfret, in Miss Umfreville's name, I desire you would provide every necessary for yourself and your daughter. She will see you soon; and before the expiration of a month, the annuity I mention shall be

settled upon you and your daughter; and she will extend it to your grandchildren, if required. I hope to be better acquainted with you ere long; meanwhile, you will greatly oblige me, if you can inform me who are your next door neighbours to the left. I have a particular reason for making the inquiry; but you may depend upon my discretion."

"I know but very little about the people you allude to, Sir, except that they are Welch, and so is my landlady, who, though a truly religious excellent woman, is rather fond of a little scandal, and she makes no allowances for younger and more thoughtless people. But I rather think your curiosity has been excited by having seen a very lively beautiful girl, who lodges in Mrs. Gwynne's first floor."

"You have guessed very right, my dear Madam; and I think I have seen the fair lady before; but I give you my honour, I have no intention of paying her a visit; nor do I think, to tell you the truth, I should

should be a very welcome guest. But I own I am rather anxious to know how long she has been in this neighbourhood, and who she gives herself out to be?"

"Mr. and Mrs. Gwynne are not very particular in that respect—more's the pity, as they are a very honest industrious couple, but so fond of liquor, that they will never get forward in the world, or save a shilling for a rainy day; and they neither require references nor characters with their lodgers; and my landlady has learnt, that the young person who gave rise to your inquiries, came very lately out of the country. She has been there about a month; and Mrs. Gwynne says she is a woman of family and fortune. Her husband has come to town to study under some great surgeon, or to walk the hospitals, as he means to set up for himself in a few years. But, to judge from your countenance, Sir, this story is not exactly gospel; and, I am fearful, some people may regret as much:

as I must rejoice at your having visited Royal Row."

"I give you my honour, I will not make mischief, my good Madam; but if it is the lady I suspect, she is not an Englishwoman."

"You must be right in your conjectures, Sir, for I understand she is a foreigner."

"A Frenchwoman, I would lay my life," cried Mrs. Ryder: "I should have grieved to have heard of a beautiful English girl's having gone wrong."

"Have you ever, Madam, seen her reputed husband?" asked our hero.

"Never, Sir. I am seldom at the window; but my landlady has told me he looks quite the country gentleman, and described him to me as appearing about one or two-and-twenty, florid complexion, stout, and rather short. Is that like the person you suspect?"

"Very much so," was the reply. "Have you heard his name?"

"Browne

“ Browne he calls himself.”

“ Aye, a good common name,” cried her friend; “ for I warrant me they can both lay claim to another.”

Our hero merely smiled, rising to take his leave, saying, “ I shall not ask you to accompany me, Mrs. Ryder, as I reside at no great distance from hence; but you must suffer me to pay your coach back to Islington,” putting a guinea into her hand.

“ I beg, Sir, you will always call upon me in future, when you want to find anybody; since, if you thus pay for coach-hire, I shall find it more advantageous than keeping a shop; and suffer me to assure you, that I shall reckon this among the happiest days in my life.”

The Marquis was standing near the window, with his hat in his hand, while she was speaking, and, happening to turn his head, in consequence of some one galloping by, he caught sight of Algernon, upon the full run, who flew up to his mistress's

mistress's door as if he had been pursued by bailiffs.—“ I am perfectly satisfied,” he said, turning to Mrs. Pomfret, “ as Mr. *Browne* is this moment gone by. May I request you will not mention my having made any remarks respecting them to your landlady, my good Madam, as I do not wish to blazon their errors? And depend upon seeing Miss Umfreville very shortly.”

Mrs. Ryder followed him down to let him out ; and he departed, while the lovers were much too well occupied to be looking after him.

CHAP. III.

WHILE crossing the bridge in his way home, our hero would have given a trifle to have heard what conjectures Algernon would form, in consequence of Pauline having seen him, and how they would act in consequence. Probably they would change their quarters. But how would Mr. Browne look when he next called upon him? Would he mention his *chere amie*? He hoped not; yet, if it should ever be discovered that he had seen him enter a house where Pauline resided, might not Mr. Langhton have reason to reproach him for not having noticed the circumstance? His
keeping

keeping so aloof from the family was now perfectly accounted for, since doubtless he spent most of his time at Lambeth. Yet, situated as they were, and more than doubting of their relationship, what need had he to interfere in the business? Still he could not reconcile his conscience to absolutely winking at what he knew Mr. Langhton would most severely reprobate; since his having seduced an innocent girl, and persuaded her to leave her home and friends, were great aggravations of his error. According to the time of day, he was most likely gone to dine with her. Possibly, when he learnt whom she had seen in the Row, it might put a check to his naturally ravenous appetite. At last, however, he resolved to call at his lodgings, as Fludyer-street was very little out of his way, and he wished to hear what Belthorpe would say, admitting he found him at home. The maid who answered the door did not know whether the gentlemen were within—she would run and see. Before,

however,

however, she reached the first landing, the front parlour door, near which our hero remained standing, was opened by a little girl, who was going in to her dinner, and, at the very moment, the maid, looking over the bannisters, called out, "They are not at home, Sir," he caught sight of Belthorpe, helping himself to a slice of roast mutton. He was therefore convinced that he had seen him pass the windows, and had given the maid her instructions how to act, and what to say ; which was certainly rather unfortunate, as matters turned out, since he also caught a full view of our hero, upon turning his head, when the child entered. The knife and fork instantly fell from his hands, and, starting from his seat, he hastened into the passage, requesting his very unexpected and very unwelcome guest would do him the honour to walk up stairs. The Marquis complied with his request, not chusing to speak before the confused maid, who slunk by him at the foot of the stairs. Belthorpe
was

was still less at his ease, and seemed hardly to know either what he said or did. The Marquis allowed him a few moments for reflection, by saying, as soon as he was within the room, "You seem to be very comfortably lodged here, Mr. Belthorpe. Algernon is not at home, I perceive?"

"No, my Lord; he went to meet Lord Dunluce, a little after one, and was to have been home by three; if not, we were not to wait dinner for him, as he thought it very probable he might dine in Portland-place, or at Lady Winifred's."

"Then I believe I may venture to assure you, he is now at dinner nearer home—that is, in Royal Row, Lambeth, with his mistress."

Belthorpe seemed half petrified, and more confused than ever, as he was but too conscious that he had not succeeded in his first attempt to impose upon his visitor, who must be aware that he had purposely been denied to him. Scarcely knowing
what

what to say, or which way to look, he faltered out, "His mistress; my Lord! 1—I hope, my Lord Marquis——"

"It is very possible you may not be quite so wise as I am, Mr. Belthorpe; still, as you were never to lose sight of your pupil, except you knew him to be with some of his relations, I am surprised you were so easily duped. As for his supposed engagements with Lord Dunluce, I should have presumed you would have objected to his keeping them, since I am convinced he is not the companion Mr. Langhton would wish him to select. Does he tell you he sleeps in Portland-place, when he devotes his night to his *chere amie*?"

"He has never, to my knowledge, my Lord, slept from home. He may, to be sure, have bribed the maid, or have let himself out after all the family are retired, as there certainly is a key always hanging behind the door. But pray, my Lord, what has led you to suppose that he keeps a mistress?"

"My

“ My having, by mere accident, seen Pauline de La Tour, about two hours ago, at her window in Royal Row; and not more than half an hour since, I saw Algernon enter the house where she resides, where I presume he means to dine.”

“ Pauline de La Tour!” exclaimed the more and more confused tutor: “ Then I fear your Lordship has guessed very right; and we shall both be ruined and undone, if you write your conjectures to Lady William. May I therefore hope, that, out of compassion to your brother, you will at least postpone doing so, till you have seen him, and heard what he has to alledge in his own defence?”

“ I have nothing to do in the business, Sir. I must presume you were not aware where and how your pupil spent his time; I therefore thought it right to let you know who and what I had seen. But I have no intention of writing to the Priory; indeed, I am rather sorry chance led me to discover Pauline’s retreat, whom you must know
had:

had left Hilton before you left the Priory, which, I must acknowledge, I fear was by Mr. Albany's request; but I shall not interfere in the business, and certainly not transmit the intelligence to Mr. Langhton, as I wish you to have all the honour of working a reformation in your pupil's way of thinking."

"Your Lordship is very considerate, and extremely obliging," was the reply; and not to keep him from his dinner, our hero took his leave, well convinced that he had effectually spoiled his appetite, and that he had taken the most likely means to bring Algernon's amour to a speedy conclusion; since policy, he conceived, would induce Belthorpe to insist upon a separation taking place between him and Pauline. How far he was right in his conjectures, the sequel will disclose.

In the evening, he waited upon General Umfreville, who always contrived to afford him a short *tête-à-tête* with the lovely Zara;

to

to whom he briefly recapitulated all that had passed between him and Mrs. Pomfret, of whom he spoke in the highest terms; and her artless expressions of gratitude much more than repaid him for the trouble he had taken. She was extremely anxious to see the worthy woman, and infinitely obliged to her beloved Malcolm, for having promised, in her name, to provide for her future wants.—“ But will a hundred a-year suffice for that purpose?” she asked.

“ Every thing goes by comparison, my dear girl; the mere wants of such a woman as Mrs. Pomfret are easily supplied: but I have it in contemplation to put her son-in-law into business again. The emoluments he will derive from that, in addition to the annuity, will, I make no doubt, render them all very comfortable; and Mrs. Pomfret will feel herself less a dependant, than were we to enable her to keep her carriage; for, to render her comfortable, we must not remove her from the sphere in which she

she has been accustomed to move, nor place her above her kind but less fortunate friends."

"How much I approve of your notions, my dear Malcolm! Ostentatious gifts, as my poor mother used to say, are very distinct from real charity; and I am convinced your method of presenting my trifling offering to this worthy woman, greatly enhanced its value. For his own sake, I wish my father possessed your real benevolence; but he is so afraid of lowering himself, that he cannot bring himself to acknowledge any poor relations; since I have known him very generous towards strangers. But while you were upon your charitable expedition, we went down to the villa, which is nearly ready for our reception; indeed, the General means to take up his abode there on Saturday. I hope he will find benefit from the change of the air, and amusement in superintending his workmen. Thank Heaven, he is much less fretful than he used to be."

The

The Marquis thought that might very easily be accounted for, as he knew the General was so well pleased at having brought about the match between him and Zara, that it even influenced his general behaviour, and had certainly rendered him infinitely more kind to his daughter.

But though our hero devoted so much time to his mistress, he generally saw Juliano once a-day, to whom alone he launched out in praise of the lovely girl, whom he had rendered him very impatient to see. Nor were the Earl and the Doctor remiss in their visits to the counsel before whom they had laid his case; who, after due deliberation, agreed, that it would be most prudent to commence their attack by addressing Father Benedetto as from a magistrate, before whom it might be presumed Juliano had been brought, to give an account of himself, in conformity to an act of Parliament respecting aliens; and as, from his incoherent tale, it appeared he had been confined at Langhton Priory, the

Father must be requested to enter into some necessary details respecting so strange a circumstance, as the person who wrote presumed the youth was an impostor, who had merely invented this improbable fiction, to account for his not having complied with the conditions of the said act now in force. A speedy answer might be required, and as they would purposely suffer the old man to suppose they were more ignorant than was really the case, they thought he might relate a different tale to the one he had told when informed that his prisoner had made his escape. Should, however, lenient measures fail of inducing him to acknowledge the real truth, they must institute a legal suit of inquiry.

The Marquis hoped this letter would so alarm the old hypocrite, that he would apply to him for advice how to proceed; in which case, he was prepared how to lead him on, to make him confess having exchanged the children. Should he not answer the first letter, another might be dis-

patched by a special messenger, in which they might hold out such threats as might induce him to enter into some sort of explanation. Should he come to town in consequence of the application, the magistrate in whose name they should address him was to be prepared to receive him; and the counsel made no doubt of frightening him into declaring the truth.

It was therefore finally agreed to address the friar early in the ensuing week, without letting Juliano know of their intention, as they particularly wished to have it ascertained who he really was, before they gave him any reason to suspect he was an Albany.

Dr. Campbell and our-héro had sat rather late on this very evening, debating what was likely to be the result of the meditated application to the Father, and what steps it was likely Belthorpe and Algernon would take, in consequence of the Marquis having seen Pauline in Royal Row. Malcolm was therefore not much surprised to find his supposed brother in the breakfast-parlour
the

the next morning. As Dr. Campbell presided at the tea-table, Algernon merely attributed his visit to his wish to inquire how the Marquis did, whom he was fearful he should not have found at home at a later hour, as he almost lived in Harley-street. Our hero agreed he had been very much out of late; and as soon as he could with propriety leave them *tête-à-tête*, the Doctor withdrew, saying, "I am going into Wells-street, my Lord."

Our hero nodded his thanks; and Algernon hastily began—"I did not like to speak before your old Mentor, as you call the Doctor; but you got me into a pretty hobble yesterday, by calling at our lodgings. B. has done nothing but lectured me ever since. I hope in God you have not written to the Priory?"

"I thought I told Mr. Belthorpe I had no such intention, since I did not consider myself authorised to do so. Had you been more candid with me, when I questioned you respecting Pauline, I should not have

communicated the discoveries I had made to Mr. Belthorpe, though I certainly should not have approved of your having seduced a poor girl, who was in a manner under your grandfather's protection."

"Then you really think, brother, that I prevailed upon Pauline to leave Hilton."

"She might not require much persuasion to come into your plans; but the fact speaks for itself."

"Now positively, as I believe I once told you, her mother and she fell out, and she set off of her own accord; but she has since acknowledged, that knowing I was coming to London, she had resolved to precede me hither; and to my great surprise, I received a letter from her, soon after my arrival, in which she invited me to visit her in Royal Row, where you saw both her and me, Belthorpe tells me. But, pray, how came you to visit such an out-of-the-way place?" affecting a gaiety he was far from feeling—"You went into No.—; and

and there are only old or married women there, I understand."

"I went to visit an old lady there—Are you satisfied?"

"Certainly; I did not mean to be impertinent; but I mean to tell you how matters stand between Pauline and me.—I had certainly kissed and played with her a little at Hilton; and she thought, that if she came to London, I should go to church with her; and if, after such a proof of her love, I should play the fool, why, who can blame me? it will be her fault, not mine. But I do mean to set Madame's mind at ease, by letting her know that I have seen her daughter; and I shall endeavour to make up matters between them, as I shall have no objection to her returning home now." (This was said with a knowing leer.)

"And I am sure we may depend upon your discretion, as you cannot think what distress I found her in yesterday, owing to her having seen you."

"I shall not interfere in the business, I

have already told Mr. Belthorpe. He, as the mother's and your confessor, is much the most competent to advise you how to make Pauline amends for having taken advantage of the invitation she gave you; and I shall certainly not mention having seen her, when I write to the Priory."

"That is being very good. So give me your hand once more; and leave me to manage B. Should he be too impudent, it is only reminding him that I shall, one of these days, be owner of Langhton Priory—that will silence him."

"No doubt," replied our hero; who could have added, that he had his doubts whether he ever would be so great a man; though he entertained none of Belthorpe's being in all his secrets, since who else could have provided her with money for her journey, procured her a lodging, or have informed her where she might find her admirer? That he might have read Algernon a lecture, respecting his own and Pauline's want of caution, he thought very probable;

probable; but as to his being really angry, that was a mere farce, of which he was by no means the dupe. He was therefore not sorry when Algernon took his leave; as he wished to call in St. James's-square before he proceeded into Harley-street.

The Marquis of Derwent had signified his entire approbation of the prudent choice he had made, and sincerely wished he had waited the arrival of the East Indian, before he had parted with his liberty, since he was absurd enough to fancy he might in that case have rivalled one of the most elegant young men of the age. The Marchioness was not at home. She had formed an acquaintance with various women of rank and fashion, who were all anxious to lead her into the follies which rank and fortune tolerate, as a slight punishment to her *caro sposo* for having made so strange a choice.

After a short visit, therefore, our hero departed; and upon reaching Harley-street, he found Mrs. Glover and her pupil debating the various merits of Italian opera and plays.

Zara acknowledged she should always give the preference to the latter, expressing a great wish to hear Braham.

“ I will request Lady Algernon will make a party to visit Drury-lané, the first time he performs,” said our hero.

Mrs. Glover, now all complaisance, was rejoiced at the prospect there was of her dear young friend’s very natural wish being gratified.

Zara was rather hurt than flattered by the wonderful alteration which had taken place in her behaviour; and as they were to remove to the villa the next day, the Marquis readily agreed to dine and sleep there on the Sunday, upon condition the General suffered his daughter to accompany the Countess to the play, the first time the Cabinet was performed, or any opera in which Braham sung. He declared that he had no objection to her visiting every public place that was open, in his and Lady Algernon’s company; entering into a thousand details respecting settlements, and then
reverting

reverting to his villa, which he hoped to render one of the most elegant retreats in the environs of the metropolis. And certainly our hero had never before been so sensible of the almost magic power of riches as when he arrived, with Rosalie, who had been included in the General's invitation to dinner, the next day, at Umfreville Lodge, which was now furnished in the most elegant and expensive manner; the finest exotics perfumed every room; and, in summer, the Marquis conceived it would be a most delightful habitation.

The General had already planned various additions and alterations, which he, of course, pointed out to our hero, requesting he would give his opinion very freely, as it was for him and his children that he was going to work. The Marquis, who never flattered even those he loved, pointed out the only alterations he thought necessary, in the interior of this superb habitation; but strongly advised his making various improvements in the grounds, well aware

that that would afford him occupation, which must be beneficial to his health, and conducive to his good humour.

Before he returned to town on the Monday, he was obliged to hear the General's lawyer run over the rough draft of his marriage-settlements; and as our hero knew, that to argue with him upon any point, would be a mere waste of time, and might, by irritating him, shorten his days, he suffered him to have his own way in every respect, well aware that he could amply make up for any want of liberality he might evince towards his daughter, whose hands ought to be tied, the General maintained; no woman ever made a proper use of power; and he should deserve to be deemed insane, were he to render even his own child independent of her husband; desiring the lawyer to be as expeditious as possible, who, though overwhelmed with business, promised to put the settlements in hand immediately, and by the expiration of a fortnight, he flattered himself they would be ready.

At last our hero was suffered to depart, who promised to ride over the next morning, when he hoped to be able to inform Miss Umfreville when she might hope to see, or rather hear, the celebrated singer. He therefore hastened into Portland-place, as soon as he had dined, to impart her wishes to Lady Algernon; who, having seen in the papers that the Cabinet was to be performed on Wednesday, sent immediately to secure places, and desired he would engage the General to bring his daughter to dine in Portland-place, where she should sleep, if, as her Ladyship supposed, he returned to his villa.

The Marquis promised to obey her orders; merely stipulating, that she would do him the favour to breakfast in Arlington-street on the Thursday morning, if Zara was suffered to sleep at her house, as he wished to take her with him to pay a visit in the neighbourhood, and might not have such another excellent opportunity; briefly relating to her and the Earl all that had

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passed

passed between them respecting Mrs. Pomfret, where he had found her, &c. &c. merely omitting having added to Zara's donation.

Both Lord and Lady Algernon were delighted with this convincing proof of the excellence of her disposition, and readily agreed to breakfast with him, to afford her an opportunity of seeing this sole surviving relation of her mother. The Earl also seized an opportunity to inform him, that their counsel, who had, by his advice, made inquiries respecting the Prior in Somers Town, having understood that he was expected home in the course of the week, had wished to delay writing to the Father, till it was seen what discoveries they could make, by taking the Prior before a magistrate; and, in consequence, his Lordship had agreed to postpone dispatching the important epistle, for one week more; but if the monk was not then returned to Somers Town, he was resolved not to remain any longer in suspense; declaring, that

that he was more and more anxious to have Julianò reinstated in his rights, since he grew more and more ashamed of Algernon Albany every time he saw him : and when he learnt the recent discovery our hero had made respecting him, he declared he should not feel perfectly happy, till the friar was brought to acknowledge the truth, as the more he saw or heard of the two young men, the more he was convinced that Algernon was an impostor ; protesting, he would shew the Father no mercy, if he seemed inclined to be refractory ; though he could not take any blame to himself for not having watched more strictly over his deceased brother's children, since even Lady William Albany had not been aware of the exchange.

CHAP. IV.

AFTER breakfasting with Julian, our hero rode down to Umfreville Lodge, to deliver Lady Algernon's message to the General; who readily agreed to bring Zara to dine in town the next day, and to leave her to sleep in Portland-place, the Marquis promising to bring her and Rosalie to dine at the villa on the Thursday.

Having thus settled matters perfectly to his satisfaction, our hero, who was engaged to dine at General Lord ——'s, who had been with the army in Egypt, returned to town; but not having called in Welbeck-street since Sunday evening, when he left
Rosalie

Rosalie there, he rode thither, before he went home ; and as her Ladyship was at home, he dismissed his horses and groom, preferring to walk from thence into Arlington-street.

Being shewn into the drawing-room, he found her Ladyship and Rosalie *tête-à-tête*, the former apparently in a very bad humour, for which she thought it necessary to account, as she particularly wished to rank high in the esteem of Lord Endermay, who, as a matter of course, inquired after Miss Albany.

“ I am only sorry she does not bear the name of her mother now, Marquis, she is grown so partial to Mrs. and the Misses Salvadore. Had she been brought up with them, it would have been very natural ; but never having seen any of them before last month, I own I did flatter myself that they would not have rivalled me in her regard : but I am merely a restraint upon the young lady, who is astonished at my want of taste, in not seeing much to admire in her Jew relatives, who called at my door about a quarter of an hour ago, and, almost
without

without my leave, at least without my absolute concurrence, have carried Miss Albany off to Hackney; as my brother's folly has prevented me from putting a decided negative upon her visiting these strange people, and Miss could not suppose I could have any objection to her obliging her mother; though the last time she went into St. Mary Axe, she staid three days, and this time I should not wonder were she to spend a week, either there or at Hackney, as she all but told me, in plain terms, that she would go, as I certainly did hesitate, when she asked my permission, wishing her to have accompanied Lady Algernon and her party to the play to-morrow night; but I suppose she has some more agreeable amusement in view; and I should not wonder were Mrs. Salvadore to endeavour to fix her future residence in her own neighbourhood, and to secure her large fortune to some member of the Synagogue. Upon my word, I am half tempted to believe that both she and your brother, Marquis, are changelings,

changelings, they are so unlike the Albanys in every respect. This is, however, the last visit my ward shall pay the purlieus of Duke's-place. When once she is of age, I shall have done with her; but while I do hold the power, I will convince her that I will be obeyed—not, believe me, that I regret her society, since my dear Rosalie is a much more agreeable companion; and I flatter myself with the belief, that she would prefer my company to that of a Mrs. Salvadore."

Without deviating from the truth, or endeavouring to pay her court at the expence of the absentee, Rosalie convinced the old Lady that she ranked very high in her esteem; and as a slight punishment for what she deemed shameful ingratitude in Miss Albany, she resolved to make the young Catholic heir to the best part of her property when she died; but prudently chose to keep this determination to herself.

The next day, the General, as agreed
upon,

upon, brought the lovely Zara, at an early hour, into Portland-place; where our hero, Lady Winifred, and Rosalie, gave him the meeting. The Nabob was extremely gay, and very attentive to Lady Winifred, who secretly wished she had kept her ward in as excellent order as he had done his daughter, as she could not at all reconcile herself to her associating with her mother, and the low set with which she conceived an inhabitant of St. Mary Axe must be surrounded. In vain did the Earl and Marquis assure her, that many Jew merchants associated with the first nobility, and vied even with royalty, in their entertainments; she was not to be reasoned out of her prejudices, having from a girl held the very name of citizen in contempt, and that of Jew in abhorrence. Finding it, therefore, a vain attempt to reconcile her to her ward's being an inmate of Mr. Salvadore, they gave up the point, though the Marquis had been very ably seconded by the General. But, at an early hour, the Countess re-
minded.

minded the young people, that if they wished to see the first act, they must be going; to which, of course, they made no objection. Therefore, leaving the Earl to entertain the Nabob and his aunt, who both meant to retire early, as Rosalie was to sleep with her fair friend in Portland-place, the party proceeded to Drury-lane, Lord Dunluce making the fifth in the coach, who had hinted to the Marquis his suspicion that Algernon was engaged in some love-affair, not having seen him for an age; if not, his tutor had taken the alarm, and had chosen to have him denied, when he called in Fludyer-street. Our hero, in reply, said he was happy to find he was not in his confidence, if he really had formed any amorous engagement; not chusing to inform him of the discovery he had made in Royal Row. But having reached the play-house in excellent time, they found themselves very comfortably seated, in one of the dress-boxes on the King's side, a few minutes before the curtain rose, which
afforded

afforded the young ladies an opportunity of looking round them. The house was very full ; but the more fashionable part of the audience had not yet made their appearance ; still this elegant party attracted general notice, as the young ladies were both remarkably handsome, and had the farther recommendation of being new faces ; and the gentlemen were both fine figures, particularly the hero of our tale, who was certainly unrivalled in point of countenance and features—at least so thought the lovely Zara, whose eyes frequently reverted to him with encreasing satisfaction. The drawing up of the curtain induced her to transfer her attention to the stage, till it was rather drawn from the performers, by a bustle in the next box to them ; and Mr. Salvadore's places being called for, " Salvadore !" whispered Rosalie ; " why, surely these are not my cousin's city relations ? "

The bare supposition rendered the whole party rather anxious to see their neighbours.

neighbours, " though there might be many more of the name," the Countess observed. But in another minute Rosalie recognised the features of the once Lady Albertus Albany, in the first lady who entered the box, who was handed down to the front seat, by an elderly gentleman, she presumed was her husband. Miss Albany was close behind her, and appeared more pleased than surprised, when she caught sight of the Countess's party; which induced that Lady and our hero to fancy this had been a concerted plan, to afford the Salvadore family an opportunity of seeing the majority of her titled relatives, and the future Marchioness of Endermay. What might also encrease her satisfaction was, she was handed in by a very handsome well dressed man, about our hero's age, and who certainly looked infinitely more the gentleman, than many of the titled men of the Marquis's acquaintance. Like his fair companion, he seemed more pleased than surprised, at finding himself in the
immediate

immediate vicinity of so many members of the Derwent family, over whom he glanced his eyes, while Hannah curtsied, or rather moved, to the Countess and Rosalie, and to Miss Umfreville, when their eyes met. Two younger ladies next made their appearance, whom Rosalie pronounced to be the Misses Salvadore; and an elderly female, the governess of the two latter, completed the party. Miss Albany's beau placed himself behind her, next the governess, and certainly appeared to the full as much a man of the world, and as scrupulous an observer of the reigning fashions, as Lord Dunluce. Mrs. Salvadore was still a very good-looking woman, and had been much handsomer than Miss Albany, at her age. She was very expensively dressed, wore rouge, for fear her jewels should diminish the lustre of her black eyes; and though she certainly looked a member of the Synagogue, she had also the appearance of a woman of consequence, and of being extremely good-humoured. Her younger daughters plainly evinced
they

they were of Jewish extraction ; else they were more elegant girls than their elder sister, and had received even a more expensive education. Mr. Salvadore looked the rich merchant, and seemed the gentleman in his manners. He was rather stout, yet did not appear vulgar ; and his language, though peculiar to his nation, was rather refined.

Both parties, it may be supposed, rather critically scrutinised each other. The Countess could have wished Lady Winifred had accompanied them, as she thought the appearance of this by her despised family was very much in their favour ; and they agreed that the Marquis was one of the finest young fellows they had ever seen ; and that Zara and Rosalie were beautiful unaffected elegant girls. Lord Dunluce wondered, in a whisper, “ Whether his favourite Hannah’s beau was a Jew or a Gentile ? ”

“ You had better ask him,” resumed the Marquis, in the same low tone. “ At all events, he looks a man of fashion.”

This

This Lord Dunluce was not inclined to allow; and having heard him address his cousin, pronounced him a descendant of the ten tribes. The Countess urged, that he was merely angry at seeing himself cut out by a city merchant; and the Marquis could not decide the point. The appearance of Braham for a time withdrew his attention from their neighbours, and entirely engrossed the notice of Zara and Rosalie, who were both delighted with his singing; and between the acts he became the object of their conversation, in which Lady Algernon joined, who never having been introduced to Mrs. Salvadore, while she bore the name of Albany, could not with propriety address her; and, after the first moment of triumph Hannah Albany had experienced upon her entrance had gone by, she almost wished she had not been so anxious to display her titled relatives to the Salvadore party, as she reflected they might inform Lady Winifred that she had a gentleman in her suit, whom
she

she might fear had encreased her partiality to St. Mary Axe, since he was certainly very attentive to her, and, considering the shortness of their acquaintance, our hero thought they seemed to be upon very familiar terms. When, however, all was over, Hannah passed her mother, to get to the side of the other box, near which the Marquis and Lord Dunluce were now standing. She affected to wish to speak to Rosalie, who happened not to see her, as she was conversing with Zara respecting two handsome children in an opposite box, to which their eyes were directed.

“ Can I convey what you wish to say to my sister, my dear coz?” asked the Marquis.

“ Shall you see Lady Winifred to-night, Marquis?” she asked.

“ I do not suppose I shall, as Rosalie sleeps in Portland-place, and she talked of going home early; but if you have any message to send her, I will take care——”

“ My dear cousin,” interrupted Lord Dunluce, “ suffer me to be your Mercury

upon this occasion : Lord Endermay would make a point of conscience of breaking in upon her Ladyship's retirement, a moment sooner than she would deem consistent with etiquette ; while I, to oblige you, should not mind waking her out of her first sleep."

" You boast of more than you dare perform, my dear coz," was the retort.

At that moment, Rosalie having turned round, she beckoned to her, saying, " Was Lady Winifred in a better humour to-day, my dear girl, than when I took leave of her yesterday?"

" I left her in Portland-place, and in very good spirits. She expects you home to-morrow—I presume you recollect."

" I know she does ; but, as I fear she may object to my again visiting my mother, I shall seize the present opportunity to keep holiday : therefore, will you be so obliging as to inform her that we met very accidentally this evening, and that I am going to Windsor to-morrow ? but she may depend upon seeing me on Friday evening."

" I will

“ I will certainly deliver your message; but as I may not see her till late in the day to-morrow, suppose you write her your intentions; she will think it more respectful, and I will endeavour to amuse her during your absence.”

“ You are very kind. I know she will feel herself offended, as she is extremely jealous of my mother.—Talking of that, how do you like Mr. Salvadore and my sisters?” (This was spoken in a low whisper.) “ Mr. Mendez is a relation of Mr. Salvadore’s.”

“ I am shocked to death to be obliged to break up your conference, my dear cousins,” cried Lord Dunluce; “ but Lady Algernon’s carriage stops the way, and we must be going, fair Rosalie;” who was not sorry she was thus prevented from giving her opinion of Mr. Mendez and the Salvadore family; and having soon joined the rest of the party, they hurried down to the door at which the carriage was in waiting; and having taken their seats, were presently

out of the crowd and bustle attendant upon all public places, when the Countess inquired, whether Hannah had sent any message to Lady Winifred, and when she meant to return into Welbeck-street?

Rosalie repeated all that had passed between them.

“She will quite provoke Lady Win, if she thus trespasses upon her indulgence; and I cannot approve of Mrs. Salvadore’s encouraging her to treat her Ladyship with disrespect, though I agree she may feel herself hurt at having had her maternal feelings so little consulted in the first instance. But did she, my dear girl, tell you who her beau was?”

“She merely informed me that his name was Mendez, Ma’am, and that he was a relation of Mr. Salvadore’s.”

“I told you he was a Jew,” cried Lord Dunluce.

“His name would lead me to suppose you are right,” rejoined our hero; “but he is the handsomest Jew I ever saw.”

“I am

“ I am inclined to think he is merely of Jewish extraction,” said Lady Algernon; “ at all events, he is rather a dangerous companion for Hannah Albany, since Lady Winifred will never consent to her forming such a connexion.”

“ Mrs. Salvadore must be aware of that,” said our hero; “ and he may be otherwise engaged, if not married.”

“ That I very much doubt,” obtruded Lord Dunluce. “ At all events, Hannah was in high luck aunt Winny withstood the temptation of accompanying us to Drury-lane, since, I dare say, she would have ordered her into our box, if she had not set out for Highwood at daybreak to-morrow morning.”

“ We must mention having seen her with the Salvadores,” said the Marquis; “ but I think we have no need to enter into any farther details.”

“ Now positively, Marquis, I think aunt Winny ought to be told that there are handsome Jews, which she is very much inclined

to doubt ; for suppose Solomon, or Moses, or Isaac Mendez, should snap up my pretty Poll, and she should afterwards learn that we saw them together, she will vow we were all in a league against her."

This ridiculous speech highly amused Zara and Rosalie. It was, however, finally resolved not to mention Mr. Mendez to her Ladyship, since Mrs. Salvadore would certainly not wish to promote a match between her and her daughter.

The Earl was alone when they arrived in Portland-place ; and when informed whom they had seen, he wished he had joined them when his guests departed ; never having seen Mrs. Salvadore since she was a widow ; though he much feared Lady Winifred would highly resent Hannah's taking advantage of circumstances to visit Windsor ; and were she even to suspect a handsome Jew was of the party, she would never suffer Hannah to visit St. Mary Axe again ; not that he supposed either she or her mother were inclined to favour Mr.

Mendez,

Mendez, who might nevertheless be a very amiable pleasant man, and, religion apart, more likely to render the girl happy than any needy man of rank, who might overlook the blot in her escutcheon, for the sake of her fortune. So thought our hero; but agreed Lady Winifred would not be of the same opinion.

It was late, it may be presumed, before the party retired; yet they all met at eleven o'clock the next morning, in Arlington-street, where, after partaking of an elegant breakfast, they again separated; the Countess saying, she should proceed into Welbeck-street, as she feared Lady Winifred would be terribly out of sorts when she received Hannah's note; and should she not have written, it would be necessary to inform her when she might expect to see her; advising the Marquis and the young ladies to call upon her in their way to Umfreville Lodge. They promised they would. The Earl and Lord Dunluce had other engagements; and as soon as they

were gone, our hero, Zara, and Rosalie, who was in all their secrets, crossed the Park, on foot, and proceeded over the bridge to Royal Row, and reached Mrs. Pomfret's door between one and two. It was a-jar, owing to the mistress of the house being gone into the neighbourhood. Therefore, not to derange the old lady, who he knew was rather infirm, the Marquis led the way to her room door, at which he knocked. Presuming it was her landlady, Mrs. Pomfret called out, "Come in, Mrs. Griffiths;" when, to the infinite surprise of her and her family, who were all seated round her at dinner, our hero and his two elegant companions entered the apartment. Though the least able, Mrs. Pomfret was the first to rise; and her son-in-law, daughter, and children, instantly did the same, wondering who these fine folks were. But they were not long kept in suspense, since the moment Mrs. Pomfret caught a full view of the lovely Zara, she hastened forward, and, throwing her arms round her, she said,

"I require

“ I require no introduction to you, my dear young lady: I am sure you are the daughter of my beloved niece,” embracing her with streaming eyes; but while she was welcoming, thanking, and blessing Zāra in the same breath, our hero surveyed the rest of the party, whose frugal meal, the remains of a piece of cold boiled beef and some warm potatoes, shewed that they were economical from principle, and that the late money they had received, and the promises he then made them, had not rendered them unmindful of the past, nor less frugal in their expenditure.

The son-in-law, whose name was Benwell, being in his working-dress, wished to have left the room, when he understood who Miss Umfreville was; but the Marquis would not suffer him, declaring he was very sorry they had so ill-timed their visit—his dress was a proof of his industry, and did him credit.

“ Your wife and children, I presume?” looking at a very pretty delicate woman, and two neat infants, who were clinging to her,

her, not knowing what to make of these strangers.

“ Yes, and please your honour,” was the reply.—“ I only wish they had as much reason to be proud of me as I am of them. My imprudence brought them and my excellent mother-in-law into the greatest distress: yet they have never reproached me for having almost reduced them to want bread. To be sure, I was not absolutely to blame; and I have been doing all in my power since, to maintain them in some degree of comfort; and I bless God I was enabled to pay fifteen and ninepence in the pound when I broke; therefore, I soon got my certificate; and had it not been for the heavy law expences, and my goods having been sold off at a great disadvantage, I could have paid everybody their own, and have had a few pounds left; while the rascals who occasioned my ruin have not made a dividend yet, and are not likely, first and last, to pay more than half-a-crown in the pound.”

“ Then

“ Then you must feel infinitely happier than ever they will do,” replied the Marquis; “ and as I am always inclined to promote the welfare of really industrious people, tell me candidly, what money it would require to set you up in business again? Miss Umfreville means to provide for Mrs. Pomfret; therefore I shall take upon me to place you above want.”

“ Speak freely, my good friend,” said the benevolent Zara, perceiving that the poor man hesitated; “ the Marquis of Endermay holds out no promises that he will not more than fulfil.”

With increased confusion, upon finding he was in the presence of so great a man, Benwell ventured to say, “ That he had broke for nine hundred pounds.”

“ Then, not to keep you in suspense, my worthy friend, and to convince you that I am resolved to be your friend, if you will give me a pen and ink, I will fill up a check upon my banker for a thousand pounds, which will, I hope, enable you to

set up again with an equal prospect of success, and a larger stock of experience; and should you ever require a few hundreds more when you are settled, be candid, and you shall always find me your friend."

The astonished and overjoyed family gazed at each other for a moment in silent amaze, appearing to doubt the evidence of their ears; when Mrs. Pomfret, who had learnt from Zara how much she had already been indebted to our hero's generosity, involuntarily fell upon her knees, to return her thanks to her's and her children's benefactor. Benwell and his wife instantly did the same; but were unable to utter a word expressive of their heartfelt gratitude. Their tears were, however, sufficiently eloquent; and their eldest girl, who was about four years old, followed their example, requesting the much affected Zara, who had been endeavouring to raise her aged relation, would forgive her, as she would be very good, and learn her letters. Catching her up, and tenderly kissing her, she assured her

her

her she should henceforth do so at her expence: and while the Marquis, who had insisted upon Benwell and his wife resuming their seats, was filling up the promised check, Zara told the delighted grandmother, that, in addition to the hundred a-year she meant immediately to settle upon her and her daughter, she would take the education of this child upon herself; when, perceiving that our hero had done, she rose to take her leave, promising to see Mrs. Pomfret again, the first opportunity; and with the check, the Marquis gave young Benwell his card, upon which he had written his full address, saying, “ Make no scruple of applying to me, if you require a few hundreds more, to set you comfortably a-going. The annuity Miss Umfreville means to settle upon Mrs. Pomfret and your wife, shall be properly secured by an appropriate deed, which my attorney shall bring you; but, not to keep you any longer from your dinner, we shall bid you adieu, for the present. But I must request we may soon hear how you have settled matters,

matters, as I am anxious to see you all in a more comfortable situation."

The Marquis and his lovely companions now withdrew, probably even more gratified than the party they left; who of course guessed that this handsome young Lord was upon the point of marriage to Miss Umfreville, to oblige whom he had thus amply provided for all their future wants.

His Lordship's post-chaise and four was in waiting when they returned into Arlington-street, in which they all three proceeded into Welbeck-street:

The Countess had found Lady Winifred pacing her drawing-room, with her ward's note in her hand, which she immediately put into Lady Algernon's hands, saying, "I have just received that from Hannah—" whenever she so styled Miss Albany, it was a sure sign she was highly displeased with her—"who has actually had the assurance to set off with those Jews to Windsor, after promising me she would return home to-day; and that I might not have it in my power

power to prevent her going, she did not dispatch her note till they were in the carriage."

The Countess thought Mrs. Salvadore was more to blame than her daughter, as she ought to have been aware of the impropriety of taking her so far from home, without having previously asked her Ladyship's consent; mentioning having seen her at the play, and was giving her opinion of the Jew merchant and his daughters, when the Marquis, Zara, and Rosalie, joined them; and the latter instantly said, "That her cousin had told her that she was going to Windsor with her mother and sisters, and had requested that she would apologize to her Ladyship, for her having rather taken French leave upon the occasion, as the party had been made purposely upon her account, as she presumed she was fearful of hurting Mrs. Salvadore's feelings, had she refused to have gone with them, else she knew she was afraid her Ladyship would feel herself offended."

"You

“ You plead her cause much better than she does herself, my dear Rosalie, as she well knows she acted in direct opposition to my commands, when she went into public with those Salvadores. To be seen with such people, is enough to prevent her ever forming an eligible connexion. I only wonder she does not spend their Sabbath with them, as the next thing I shall expect to hear is, that she is turned Jewess—she is one in her heart already.”

The Countess affected to laugh at the notion; and as Lady Winifred fancied she had caught a cold, and objected to accompanying her home, Rosalie requested Zara would excuse her proceeding to the villa, as she could not think of leaving her Ladyship at home, and unwell.

We must do Lady Winifred the justice to declare, she did not wish thus to tax her young inmate's politeness, though she was both flattered and pleased when she persisted in remaining in town. The Marquis and Zara, therefore, set out for the villa *tête-à-tête*;
and

and both were astonished when they drove round the sweep leading to the house, the journey never before having appeared so short to either. The General was still surrounded by workmen; and, though rather disappointed in not seeing Rosalie, he was perfectly satisfied with her reasons for remaining in town; vowing, that were he in Lady Winifred's place, he would make the young lady repent having disobeyed orders. The Marquis made no doubt but he would; but not wishing to hear him display his arbitrary spirit, he changed the subject, and had the satisfaction of seeing him in an excellent humour with his daughter, when he took his leave, promising to spend Saturday and Sunday at the Lodge.

CHAP. V.

LITTLE of moment occurred during the three following days. Miss Albany returned home on the Friday evening, and, as may be supposed, met with a very cool reception from Lady Winifred, who assured her, that, except to take leave, she should not, with her consent, again visit Mrs. Salvadore. This she expected, she told Rosalie, who accompanied her brother down to the Lodge on Saturday. He had breakfasted with his favourite, with whom Dr. Campbell spent some time every day, and who felt himself doubly flattered at being so frequently visited by our hero, now he was
the

the declared admirer of a woman he sincerely loved, and to whom he devoted more time than he probably would have done to a more fashionable belle, with a view of keeping her irascible father in some degree of order.

At an early hour on the Monday, he returned to town with Rosalie, with whom he first proceeded into Welbeck-street. Lady Winifred was in very great tribulation, having just received a letter from her housekeeper, who had written to inform her, that Gordon, her venerable house-steward, bailiff, agent, and *factotum*, who had long been in a declining state of health, was so much worse, that his life was despaired of, and he was in consequence extremely anxious to deliver up his trust to some confidential person of her appointing, as he had much to say, and many things relative to his accounts to explain, besides various instructions to give them respecting some of the tenants, whose leases were expiring, and whom he knew would take unwarrantable advantages of any stranger they

they might hope to mislead; yet he could not bear the idea of delegating his power or delivering up his accounts to her Ladyship's attorney, as he might act very contrary to her wishes or her interest: and he was as prejudiced against lawyers, as her Ladyship was against Jews. Her Ladyship was lamenting over this letter, when our hero arrived, and debating whether she ought not to return home in consequence; yet in that case, she must call in her attorney, and that she was very averse to do. While she was thus running on, an idea occurred to the Marquis, which induced him to propose setting out himself for Highwood, to oblige her. She was extremely surprised, and infinitely flattered, by his very unexpected determination; but declared she dare not take advantage of his polite offer, situated as he was with respect to Miss Umfreville. Possibly either he or Dr. Campbell could recommend some trusty person to succeed Gordon.

“That must be a future consideration; and it might be of importance to her interest,

terest, that one of her friends should hear all he had to say, and take charge of his papers and keys. Miss Umfreville would doubtless grant him leave of absence for a few days; and, with her leave, Rosalie should return with him to the villa, where, if she had no objection, she should remain while he was gone."

Both her Ladyship and Rosalie highly approved of the notion; and he departed, promising to call for his sister by four, at latest, as he proposed dining with the General.

From her Ladyship's he hastened into Portland-place, to inform his uncle why he had so readily undertaken to become her Ladyship's representative upon this occasion, as he thought he might, through the means of Donald, discover whether the Prior had been, or still was in that neighbourhood, since he must be either at Hilton or secreted in the turret. The Earl highly approved of his intention, requesting he would accompany him to their counsel's, who might probably wish the first letter to the
Father

Father should be sent while he was in the neighbourhood, as he would very probably be consulted by the old hypocrite, were he upon the spot; and, at all events, he would be able to draw some conclusions from the old fellow's behaviour. Counsellor ——— thought it a very fortunate circumstance the Marquis was going into that neighbourhood, since, if the first letter had not the desired effect, a second might be sent, under cover, to Mr. Langhton, which must lead to some decisive explanation. It was therefore settled, that the first should be dispatched the next day, by which means it would reach the Priory the morning after his arrival at Highwood; and as he knew the time of day when the post came in, he promised, if he could at all make it convenient, to be at Mr. Langhton's when the important letter was delivered, as he should then see what effect it would have upon the old sinner, who would most probably consult him as to how he ought to proceed, as he must let Mr. Langhton know that his
supposed

supposed nephew was at last forthcoming, and he would certainly wish to be guided by his advice.

Our hero therefore hastened home, to give Donald orders respecting his journey, who was convinced that he should be able to ferret out the old Prior, if he was in the neighbourhood. Leaving him, however, to make the necessary preparations; the Marquis proceeded to his favourite Julianos, to whom he merely acknowledged he was going to seek the Prior; as their counsel thought he ought to be secured, before they proceeded to alarm the Father; Dr. Campbell would see him every day during his absence; and, under cover to him, he would write him, should anything material transpire. Julianos could only regret he was the occasion of his undertaking such a journey; repeatedly declaring, that he should be perfectly satisfied with the title of his friend; acknowledging that he feared he should come out to be the natural child of some churchman, whenever

whenever Father Benedetto chose to declare who he really was. Our hero merely observed, that he hoped better things; but, as it grew late, bid him farewell; and having ordered his curricule to meet him in Welbeck-street, he went in search of Rosalie, who was ready to attend him. Therefore, after promising to call for her Ladyship's final commands on his return, he drove his sister to the Lodge.

The General was extremely happy to see him; but blamed him for being so complaisant to Lady Winifred. He therefore told him, in confidence, that he had far more serious reasons than merely to receive her steward's keys and papers, for undertaking this journey, promising to be more explicit when he returned. This explanation satisfied the Nabob, who assured him the settlements would be ready by the end of the week. He hoped to be in town again by that day week at farthest; promising to write to him and Zara, should any unforeseen event detain him a day longer than he expected.

expected. She was extremely obliged to him for having brought his sister to stay with her while he was away, as she acknowledged she should think the time long till she saw him again. He assured her, that no trifling business would have induced him to have absented himself from London, situated as they were; but there were reasons, which he was not at present at liberty to explain, which rendered it absolutely necessary that he should visit Lancashire. She assured him, in return, that she was not so selfish as to expect to engross all his time; and as he had given Rosalie the same reason for having so readily undertaken this journey, she feared he had made some discoveries respecting her brother, which he thought it necessary to make known to Mr. Langhton; but did not chuse to ask him any questions, well aware that he must have some particular motive for declining to enter into any explanation.

Between seven and eight he returned to town. Lady Winifred had written him her

full instructions how to proceed, she said, having, in fact, given him a *carte blanche*; and requested that he would be solely guided by his own superior judgment, as she should sanction everything he did. He promised to be guided by circumstances, and to write for further orders, should any unforeseen event occur during his absence.

He then returned home, where he found Dr. Campbell and Algernon, whom he had sent to invite to sup with him, waiting his return. The former almost immediately left the latter *tête-à-tête* with him, whom he had merely seen once for a few minutes with Lord Dunluce, since he had made the discovery respecting Pauline, as the youth had kept more than ever aloof from every member of the family since that period; and he was not a little startled when our hero told him he had sent for him—"To inquire whether he had any message to send to Mr. Langhton and Lady William Albany, as he proposed setting out for Lancashire at daybreak the next morning?"

"Good

“ Good Heavens! what can have induced you to take such a journey, my dear brother?”

“ Business for Lady Winifred. And, if you wish it, I can let Madame de La Tour know how eligibly her daughter is situated.”

“ For Heaven’s sake, do not drop a hint of the kind to any soul in that neighbourhood, as I would not have grandfather know that Pauline and I have met, for something; so, pray, don’t give either him or my mother reason to suppose I have run riot, as I positively mean to be very good when I return home.”

“ Then, of course, you mean to send Pauline back to her mother?”

“ Why, I think she would be wise if she were to return to Hilton; but she is very averse to the measure; and I cannot oblige her to place herself under the old woman’s care again.”

“ Mr. Bèlthorpe may be able to settle that matter for you; but I give you my honour,

I will not mention her name at the Priory, except any particular inquiries should be made, or anything occurs that may render it absolutely necessary, which does not appear very probable." And as Algernon knew he might depend upon his brother's word, and was well aware that no man was less inclined to make mischief, he was perfectly satisfied, and hoped he would make proper excuses for his not having written to his grandfather and mother. He promised to satisfy them in that respect, since he had purposely not allowed him time to write, not wishing to be the bearer of letters, in which he knew he must strangely deviate from the truth. And at an early hour, under pretence of wishing to retire, he sent him home in his carriage. He had then a long conversation with Dr. Campbell, who gave him an exact copy of the letter which was to be written to the Father, and various written instructions from the counsellors how to draw the monk on to make the desired confession; and having
fully

fully settled his plan of action, he retired to bed; and at five o'clock next morning, he set out for Highwood, accompanied by Donald and two other servants; and having met with nothing to detain him on the road, he arrived there about noon on the Thursday; and, to his great satisfaction, found Gordon still alive, and in better spirits than he had expected, though perfectly conscious of his approaching dissolution, which made him very anxious to deliver up his accounts, papers, and keys, to our hero, and to enter into all those details he thought of such consequence to his Lady's interest. The Marquis, though of opinion that all he had to say might have been safely communicated to the housekeeper, took minutes of all he said; and listened very patiently to his prolix explanations respecting some of the leases and deeds he now delivered up to him, the heads of which he also wrote down for the benefit of his successor; and was retiring, when his physician joined them, who told our hero, as they left the

sick-room together, that his patient might live a week, nay perhaps a fortnight, though it was very possible he might not survive the next day. Having, however, received all his books, papers, and keys, which he deposited, by her Ladyship's desire, in an iron-chest, of which she had given him the key, he sat down to an early dinner; and then, having written three lines to her Ladyship, to set her mind at ease, and as much more to the General and Zara, he rode over to the Priory, where he proposed drinking his tea; and it may be supposed that his very unexpected visit occasioned no small degree of surprise to the small party, who were already assembled round the tea-table. Indeed, Lady William was seriously alarmed, till she read, in his intelligent countenance, that he was not the herald of bad news. Of course, he immediately informed them what had brought him into Lancashire; and presented her Ladyship and Mr. Langhton with letters from Rosalie; and accounted, in a very satisfactory manner, for having
none

none from Algernon, whom he assured them he had left in excellent health. The Father had appeared almost breathless during his very concise explanation, and seemed very much relieved when he understood Gordon's illness had brought him into the vicinity. It may be supposed he was even profuse in his compliments to a person he styled the preserver of his life, and for whom he affirmed he had never omitted praying, both morning and evening. The Marquis was not much flattered by his obsequiousness; but endeavoured to treat him with his usual affability. Both Mr. Langhton and Lady William congratulated him upon his approaching nuptials; and he entered into a few details respecting the General and the lovely Zara, who was extremely partial to Rosalie, he said. Therefore, he hoped, in future, she would be allowed to spend some months every year with them, either in town or country. Lady William declared that she should not object to so kind a proposal; Mr. Langhton

was no less complaisant; and the Father thought Rosalie ought to deem herself very fortunate, in having made so favourable an impression upon the future Marchioness of Endermay; inquiring how Algernon spent his time in London? Without deviating from the truth, the Marquis spoke of him in rather favourable terms; and as it grew dusk, having rode over with a groom of Lady Winifred's, he rose to depart; when, as he had expected, he was very much pressed to sleep at the Priory, Lady William telling him, that she would put him into Rosalie's bed, in which one of the maids had slept since her departure, to keep it aired; but as he had said he should return when he left Highwood, and thought it possible Gordon might, during his absence, have recollected something else he might wish to communicate to him, he took his leave, after promising to dine with them the next day.

The letters, as it was a cross post, were in general delivered between twelve and
two

two at the Priory; and as he particularly wished to be there when Counsellor——'s arrived, he told her Ladyship he would be there early, as he wished them to dine at their usual hour. But, to his infinite mortification, he met the postman, who was upon his return to Manchester, as he entered the village, though it was not more than half past twelve; and while he was a resident at the Priory, he had never been so early; but that was in November, and it was now the latter end of April, which accounted for his disappointment. He, however, hastened forward, and was received by Mr. Langhton and her Ladyship, who were alone in the best parlour. He hoped they would agree he had not made it late; and Lady William complimented him upon being so unfashionable; while he, with assumed indifference, after looking round him, inquired how the Father did?

“He was very well,” Mr. Langhton replied; “and he believed in his own room.”

"He received a letter," added her Ladyship, "which, contrary to his usual custom, he retired to read. Do not you think he is very much altered, Marquis, since you were last here?"

"He certainly does not look so well as he did in the autumn; but that is not surprising, as the wounds he received during my residence at Highwood may have hurt his constitution; and as he has probably fretted a good deal since his nephew's departure, his having rather broke of late is not to be wondered at."

"Certainly not," resumed her Ladyship. "Indeed I know he is very much distressed in mind, though he endeavours to conceal it. Your unexpected arrival, Marquis, greatly agitated him; and the letter he received this morning, I perceive, flurried him, which perhaps prevented him from opening it before us; indeed, I fear he has something to reproach himself with, respecting his unfortunate nephew."

"You may judge him wrongfully, my
"child,"

child," said Mr. Langhton, in an impressive tone, which induced her Ladyship to drop the subject.

Our hero was now convinced, that even had he been present when the letter arrived, he should not have been able to have made any great discoveries; and possibly the friar might yet consult him privately, as the most likely person to bring him off with honour. The day, however, being very fine, he proposed a short walk to Lady William. Mr. Langhton seconded his wishes, complaining that his daughter had seldom been beyond their garden since his granddaughter's departure, and he was a great advocate for air and exercise. Therefore, soon after one o'clock, they sallied forth, without our hero having seen the Father, who he was soon convinced had very much fallen in her Ladyship's esteem since their last meeting, as she acknowledged that she rejoiced her father no longer considered him as his oracle; and she even suspected, from some hints which

Mr. Langhton had recently dropped, that he had it in contemplation to make some alteration in his will. The Father seemed to entertain some fears, yet had not endeavoured, as she should have supposed, to conciliate matters, as he confined himself more than ever to his own room, and was always gloomy and reserved when he did join the family party.

While she was entering into these details, having been sauntering along the fields leading to Hilton, our hero pointed out the spot where he had rescued the friar from the dagger of his secret enemy, who had never been discovered, she observed, and who, he frequently hinted, must have been his wretched nephew, though he must perceive that no one credited the tale.

The Marquis again declared, it was much too improbable to enforce belief; and having assisted her to cross the stile, they proceeded along the next field, till, upon looking at her watch, Lady William said, "We must turn about: it wants but a

quarter to two.”—The Marquis, being very tall, was looking over the adjacent hedge while she was speaking, having caught the glimpse of a man advancing, whom, upon a more accurate scrutiny, he pronounced to be the Father advancing towards them.

“Indeed!” she rejoined, advancing towards a lower place in the hedge, which her companion pointed out to her, and from whence she also caught a sight of the person advancing, whom she pronounced to be the friar; adding, “He has a letter in his hand, which he seems intently perusing; and as he has probably been at Hilton, I should not be surprised were he to have received some intelligence respecting Pauline de La Tour, whom probably Rosalie has told you left her mother in a very strange manner, a short time before she and Algernon went to London.”

“My sister mentioned the circumstance,” was the reply, well convinced, in his own mind, that the letter, which had doubtless

so greatly perplexed the friar, had brought him very different news. Indeed, he was surprised at his having, as it appeared he had, gone to consult with Madame upon receipt of it. Possibly he might wish to make use of her name in the business; and a handsome bribe might render her subservient to his views. Not wishing to appear to be watching his movements, they turned round, and had advanced a couple of hundred yards, before the old fellow caught sight of them before him, though wishing to be overtaken; they walked very slow, when they were conscious he had them in view; but did not turn their heads till they reached the stile, when they expected to have seen him within forty or fifty paces of them; but, to their great surprise, no one was even in sight.

“ Well, we could not both have been deceived,” exclaimed the Marquis, looking round him in amaze.

“ Certainly not,” replied Lady William;

“ he

“ he must have taken the back-road, to avoid us, though it is much farther about, and not near so pleasant.”

“ I presume he was in one of his gloomy moods,” rejoined the Marquis, as they pursued their walk.

Having soon reached the Priory, they asked the portress whether Father Benedetto was returned?

“ He has never been out,” she replied.

Not chusing to say they had seen him, they walked forward; and, while crossing the court, agreed it was possible they might have mistaken some one else for him; at all events, they would not take any notice, except the Father led to the subject, as he might either have given the portress her instructions, or have let himself in and out through the private door leading from the chapel, or he might still be behind, and wished them to precede him home. In this state of doubt and uncertainty, they entered the parlour, where they found the Father sitting opposite his patron; who instantly

rose

rose to welcome our hero, without even alluding to having seen him before; though his heightened colour, and his evidently having perspired very freely, were convincing proofs that he had, as they suspected, been out. Lady William and the Marquis, however, merely exchanged a look; but made no remarks.

During dinner, the conversation was very general; but when the servants had withdrawn, convinced that the friar did not mean to acknowledge having received any intelligence respecting his nephew, and that he probably was devising some scheme to keep his patron and Lady William in ignorance that he was forthcoming, the Marquis said, "As you have never mentioned him, Father, I presume you are still in ignorance of what has become of your nephew?"

Affecting to wipe his eyes, he assured our indignant hero, that he had never heard of him since he had contrived to escape from thence—instantly changing the subject;

ject; which convinced the Marquis that they should have more trouble than he had expected, in substantiating Juliano's claims. Determined, however, not to shew the old hypocrite any mercy, he was resolving to return to Highwood immediately after tea, to dispatch an express to the Earl, requesting a letter might be immediately sent off to Mr. Langhton, which must bring on some explanation on the part of the wily monk. While, however, they were drinking their tea, a servant arrived from Highwood, who informed our hero that Gordon had just departed this life for a better, having gone off like a lamb, as he had been conversing with the housekeeper, not two minutes before, and had given her the key, which the man now brought, with orders to deliver it to Lord Endermay, the moment the breath was out of his body; and she, in conformity to his last wishes, had sent it to the Priory.

“Are you obliged to return to Highwood,

wood, Marquis, in consequence of Mr. Gordon's death?" asked Lady William, "as I had hoped you would have slept here."

"And I must enforce my daughter's invitation," cried Mr. Langhton; "as you certainly would not, by choice, sleep in a house where there is a corpse."

"Soldiers, my good Sir, are seldom troubled with any fears respecting the living, much less the dead; but as I do not conceive I can be of any farther use at Highwood, though I may remain in Lancashire till I can hear from Lady Winifred, I shall gratify myself by becoming your inmate for the time. Therefore return home with the groom and horses, my lad, and send my valet to me. I will ride over in the morning; and the housekeeper can give any necessary order *ad interim*."

Mr. Langhton seemed extremely pleased at the Marquis having so readily acceded to

to

to his wishes, as did Lady William, with whom he remained *tête-à-tête* during the evening service.

Her Ladyship, of course, expressed her surprise at the Father's evidently wishing to make a mystery of his having been to Hilton, as she could not conceive why he should be averse to their knowing he had visited Madame de La Tour. Perhaps the letter he had received concerned her, and she wished the contents to remain a secret, which might have induced the Father to act so strangely.

"You could not have formed a more charitable conjecture," observed the Marquis: "I am fearful the Father could not give so good a reason for his mysterious conduct, as I own I do not think he was sincere, when he said he had never heard of his nephew since he escaped from his clutches."

"Why, have you any reason to suppose he ever has, Marquis?"

"I think

“ I think it very likely.”

“ It is certainly not impossible,” resumed her Ladyship, “ as I am more than ever tempted to believe the Father frequently wanders about the neighbourhood, unknown to anybody in the house, as I know the servants suspect he steals in and out through the chapel; and we have had proof positive of the truth of their suspicions this very morning. I am half tempted to mention our having seen him to Mr. Langhton, particularly as you were with me, Marquis; yet the monk is of so irritable a disposition, and so very revengeful, when seriously offended, that I positively hardly dare: though I believe he has lost almost all his influence with my father, yet I should, not like to widen the breach between them; and I know Mr. Langhton would seriously resent any overt act of deception, much as he once esteemed the friar; and should it ever be proved that he has really deceived him respecting his nephew, I much
doubt

doubt whether he would ever forgive him."

"Then I own I think the Father is in a very unpleasant predicament," replied the Marquis.

Her Ladyship was half startled by the significant expression of his countenance, and would probably have inquired why he thought so, if the entrance of Mr. Langhton and the monk had not broke in upon their *tête-à-tête*, and rendered the conversation general.

CHAP. VI.

THE friar was more than usually thoughtful during supper, for which our hero easily accounted. He eat very little, but drank even more than usual ; and though he made great efforts to shake off the weight which seemed to oppress his spirits, he could not succeed ; and when they separated for the night, he sighed deeply, after bestowing his accustomed blessing upon all present ; which led the Marquis to suppose he might fancy he was bidding some of them a long farewell. The letter he had received evidently preyed upon his mind ; he therefore had his doubts whether he might not meditate committing

committing suicide, by way of avoiding being called to an account respecting Julianos; and should he be so rashly inclined, he certainly might carry the secret of his birth to the grave with him, and thus baffle all their hopes of asserting his rights, and secure Mr. Langhton's inheritance to the supposed impostor.

When he retired for the night, he could not therefore refrain from acknowledging his fears to his faithful Donald, while undressing in his sister's apartment. The valet, who was rather superstitious, had been extremely rejoiced when he found his Lord was not to occupy the oriel chamber, which he firmly believed was haunted. He was not, however, very well pleased, when he learnt they were to sleep so near the vile old monk, as he styled the Father; and his Lord's avowed fear, that the old wretch meant to make away with himself, did not tend to reconcile him to their being in the immediate vicinity of his room, "Though God was above the devil," he

he observed ; “ and what was it to his Lordship or to him, supposing the vile rogue did tie himself up to his bed-post, or, by way of earning a martyr’s crown, he should flog himself to death ? However, as we are so near his vaulta, as he calls his room, with your Lordship’s leave, I will take a peep at him through the hole in the lumber-room, when all is quiet.”

As the same idea occurred to our hero, he encouraged the notion, though he much doubted whether Donald would dare venture alone, knowing that he suspected the friar dealt in the black art ; and as he was both anxious and curious, he said he would take upon himself to reconnoitre, resuming his coat, resolving not to go to bed, and telling Donald, that, at midnight, they would proceed into the lumber-room, as by that time every one in the house, the guilty old wretch excepted, would probably be fast asleep, though they must be very cautious, as the least noise would suffice to startle him ; and, for fear of ex-
citing

citing suspicions, or that they might be watched, Donald retired to his own room, which was a small closet adjoining his Lord's apartment; and while the clock was striking twelve, he cautiously opened his door, prepared to accompany him upon his expedition, having contrived a paper lantern, which would merely afford them sufficient light to enable them to avoid stumbling over anything; therefore, barefooted, they proceeded towards the lumber-room, and so light were they of foot, that "the blind mole would not have heard their steps." And as every precaution had already been taken by Algernon and his tutor, to enable them to make their approaches without creating any alarm, our hero softly mounted the old table, upon which stood a high old-fashioned chair, properly secured, which brought him, being very tall, more than to a level with the peep-hole, over which a piece of paper always hung suspended by a pin, to prevent a ray of light from ever discovering

Belthorpe's contrivance. Having made Donald a sign to conceal their light, he put by the paper, and instantly caught sight of three people sitting round a table, in the middle of the room, each in the very act of raising a glass of wine to their heads, and evidently receiving the toast from Father Benedetto, who was the last to do honour to it. Their conversation was, however, carried on in too low a tone to admit of his distinguishing what they said, the mere murmurs of their voice reaching his ear. He was, however, able to recognise the features of Francisco in one of the apparent jovial party, who was evidently hail fellow well met with his master in his own room; and he was not very much surprised when he recognised the features of the Prior, whom they had been so anxious to get hold of in London, in the friar's other companion, Julianio having drawn a sketch of him from recollection, which had impressed his countenance upon his mind. It was therefore evident that he had been privately
admitted

admitted through the chapel, and probably occupied the turret-chamber, as he had all along suspected. Having set down their glasses, their heads were all in conjunction over the table the next minute ; but though he could see their lips going, he could not catch a word they said.

At the expiration of a quarter of an hour, they all three rose, and from a drawer at his back, the Father took out a silk sash, such as are worn by serjeants in the army ; and holding it by one end, he gave the other to his brother monk. They then tried its strength with all theirs ; and Francisco next tried his with both in turns, and was evidently the most powerful of the three, which seemed to rejoice them. This trial of skill being over, to the Marquis's encreasing surprise, Father Benedetto knelt down, with his face towards the table, leaving his companions standing in the background, the servant holding the sash in his hand, till the Prior made him a signal, which induced him to advance very cau-

tiously, while the Father continued apparently at prayers; when, in an instant, he threw the sash twice round his neck, and the Prior, darting forward at the same moment, caught hold of the other end, and between them they affected to strangle the old wretch. Much as the Marquis thought he deserved to be so treated, he was nevertheless very near exclaiming, "Monsters, what are you about!" till, perceiving it was merely a rehearsal, to render them perfect in their respective parts, both his attention and anxiety increased. A second time the farce was repeated, with increased dexterity; and Francisco, by way of improving upon their plan, clapped his knee against his master's shoulder, the better to prevent his struggling, as the old man made every effort it was likely a person would make in such a perilous situation; and having, the Marquis plainly perceived, pointed out when the sash was either too high or too low, they made a third attempt. After which he rose, and Francisco knelt in his turn, when

when the Prior and the Father made a similar experiment upon him; the latter proceeding with the utmost deliberation, and pointing out every likely means to hasten the death of some person, whom it was evident they thus meant to murder.

The valet having resumed his seat, they each drank another glass of wine; but after a short conference, not being perfectly satisfied, our hero conceived, the Prior knelt in his turn, and pointed out to Francisco every improvement it was possible to make in the art of hastening the dissolution of a fellow-creature; when, having risen, they resumed their seats at the table, and finished their bottle; after which, Francisco reached out a plate of biscuits, and a second bottle of wine, of a better quality than the former; our hero supposed, as the Prior stroked down his stomach after emptying his glass, and seemed in very high spirits. But as he was very much fatigued, from having remained full three quarters of an hour in an awkward stooping posture, and as he was unable to

hear a word they said, presuming, besides, that the rehearsal was over, the Marquis made Donald a sign to assist him in his descent; and, with the same caution, they recrossed the passage, and regained Rosalie's room; when having shut the door, our hero told his trusty valet what he had seen, and that he, in consequence, firmly believed it was the wretches' intention to strangle Mr. Langhton, while at his devotions. Donald turned as pale as ashes, and absolutely trembled, so great was his agitation, not having a doubt of their wicked intentions, declaring he could find in his heart to strangle the whole party; yet he could not conceive how they hoped to execute their murderous intentions, without being suspected of having been accessory to Mr. Langhton's death.

"They fancy they have guarded against everything, I can conceive," rejoined our hero. "Mr. Langhton is always the last to leave the chapel, and frequently remains upon his knees at prayers for half an hour after every one has retired. They trust to

his doing so to-night, I suspect, which is alone wanting to insure their success. To attempt to strangle him in bed, would be attended with much greater risk; besides, the attitude the Father assumed is a convincing proof that they mean to perpetrate the horrid deed in the chapel, as I make no doubt they hope it will be supposed he went off in a fit; and I am sure I need not point out to you, my honest fellow, that it is our duty, at every risk, to defeat their villainous purpose. Shall you be afraid of accompanying me into the chapel, where we must conceal ourselves before the family assemble for mattins, though I do not suppose they mean to make the attempt till the service is over; but we must be ready to seize the wretches in the very act, if possible; since, were we to apprize Mr. Langhton of our suspicions, I would lay my life the vile *trio* would confute every word of my improbable tale, by relating some plausible fiction to account for what I saw them doing; besides, I could not

very well account for having thus stolen upon the Father's privacy, good as were my intentions; and it is also barely possible that I may have formed a too hasty judgment; and, at all events, I wish to have the abominable *trio* of hypocrites completely in my power, as I may then make their revealing the truth respecting Julianó the condition of their pardon. I am thus explicit, to convince you that I do not wish rashly to endanger either your or my own life; and that we can only preserve Mr. Langhton's, by unmasking the wretch he has so long patronised and protected."

"Depend upon my best assistance, my Lord, and most hearty concurrence in all your intentions. I hope you do not think me a coward, or that I should, at any time, be afraid of risking my-life in a good cause; and supported by your presence, I should not mind facing three devils. Only give me my orders, and you shall find me as obedient and as willing to second you, as any man you have ever commanded;
and

and you have had some brave fellows under you in Egypt, who were no less anxious to oblige you than I am."

"Thank you for your promise, my good fellow, since, though unarmed, to act even upon the defensive, I think we shall be more than a match for the three guilty wretches."

"Good God, how fortunate!" exclaimed Donald; "it never occurred to me, till this moment—surely my guardian angel put the notion into my head, for as it was late when I left Highwood, my Lord, and there has been rogues in this quarter, though I think they would not have mistaken me for that imp of the devil, Father B. I put your Lordship's travelling pistols into my pockets; and I have them safe, and ready prepared for action, in my room, with plenty of powder and ball."

"I am very glad you were so prudent, though I do not suppose we shall have any need to have recourse to them. Their guilt will make cowards of the wretches;

but they may serve to keep them in greater awe. We will therefore each take one; but let us be extremely cautious not to fire them, except in absolute self-defence; and even then, not except our opponents are equally well armed, as I think we can cope with three old men without fire-arms. We must, however, contrive to secrete ourselves in the chapel before the bell rings; and so indeed I should presume must the wretches we mean to surprise, as they mean to come upon Mr. Langhton unawares, while kneeling at the altar, I suspect. We must therefore place ourselves as near that as we can, unperceived, as we shall then be able to discern everything that goes forward, since it will be more than daybreak before matins are over. You have been in the chapel, Donald—I think we may conceal ourselves behind the stalls, which the monks once used to occupy, I understand, to the left of the altar; as, should the servants sit in them, the screen which runs at the back of them

them will secure us from observation. And should we, after all, be discovered, we shall certainly be able to give a satisfactory reason for being there; since probably the Prior and Francisco will also be concealed, which will certainly amount to presumptive proof of their intentions, as they will have the sash, if not some offensive weapons, about them. Therefore, Mr. Langhton must be convinced that they are in a league with his rascally confessor, whom I think I shall now be able to unmask, and to entangle completely in his own toils."

Donald had no will but his Lord's, of course declared himself at his orders; and the clock having struck three, while the Marquis was giving him full instructions how to act, having minutely described to him how the horrid attempt would doubtless be made, he thought they had better proceed to the chapel, as the party they meant to watch would doubtless come down the stairs leading from the vaults, and had not yet, he hoped, forsaken their

bottles. Lest, however, they should have preceded them thither, they resolved to reconnoitre on every side, by the assistance of their paper lanthorn, before they proceeded to their hiding-place; as, should they find them concealed, they might frighten them into confessing their intended guilt, by affirming that they had overheard their discourse in the vaults, which had led to their seeking them in the chapel. They therefore descended the great stairs, with great caution, and turned down the passage leading to the chapel, the door of which our hero gently opened; and having listened for a few minutes, not having heard the slightest movement indicative of any one being there, he ventured forward; and having walked round the building, they were convinced no one was yet concealed in any of the recesses. Having reached the upper end of the back of the stalls already mentioned, they were convinced, that, by extending themselves all their lengths upon the pavement, when the family

family came in, they should escape observation. For the present, they contented themselves with leaning against the screen, and, having put out their light, seldom ventured to converse, even in the lowest whisper.

About a quarter before four, they heard footsteps advancing from the lower end of the chapel; and, upon looking through the carved-work which decorated the screen they were standing behind, they saw the Father advancing, followed by his two accomplices. A very small wax taper which he carried, merely served to encrease the mysterious gloom which pervaded every part of the sacred pile. Fortunately, as our hero conceived, or probably to fulfil the decrees of an unerring Providence, he led them to the back of the opposite stalls, placing them at the lower end, as far from the Marquis and Donald as they could have wished; and having seen them seated on the ground, he returned into his own room; after which all remained as quiet as the grave,

grave, as our hero neither spoke nor moved, no more did Donald, though their opposite neighbours now and then conversed in a low whisper.

At last the four o'clock bell struck out, to summon the family to their devotion; and in less than a quarter of an hour, Mr. Langhton entered the chapel, with a wax-taper in his hand; the Father, who was on his right, held a similar one; and five servants completed the congregation, who had two lights between them. Having lit a lamp, that hung suspended between the stalls, they all took their places in the lower seats. While the Father began to chant the service, one of the household, our hero presumed, accompanied him upon the organ; Mr. Langhton joined very devoutly in the service; and soon after five, the Father, having concluded his task, gave all present his blessing, and then telling Mr. Langhton he was very unwell, said he should retire immediately to bed. His really pious, though bigotted patron wished him better, and

and suffered him to depart, followed by the servants, while he advanced towards the altar, and, falling on his knees, having his rosary in his hand, he appeared to address his Heavenly Father with true heartfelt devotion, which, however mistaken, our hero could revere, who, as he lay, had now a very full view of him; and he could easily suppose that the Father both looked and felt unwell when he left the chapel.

Daylight was just peeping through the lofty painted Gothic windows above the altar, as Mr. Langhton, who had previously extinguished his light, had taken his station there. Never had the Marquis been in such a state of awful suspense as he remained in for the ensuing five minutes, at the expiration of which he perceived Francisco emerging from his concealment, followed by the Prior, and they were both barefooted; and so cautiously did they advance, that had not he seen their motions, our hero would not have supposed a mouse was crossing the marble pavement—they evidently

evidently did not breathe—no more did he, so great was his agitation, and so anxious was he to spring upon the wretches. Francisco drew the sash from under his jacket as he drew near, and adjusted it in his hand when within three paces of his kneeling victim, when having looked behind him, he saw his accomplice close at his heels, who gave him an encouraging look; while Mr. Langhton, with uplifted eyes, and clasped hands, was perhaps at the very moment, our hero thought, praying for his greatest enemy. Scarcely had the reflection crossed his mind, ere, in the most dexterous manner, and in less than a second, the sash was thrown twice round the worthy man's neck, and the Prior having darted forward, to seize the other end, they actually tightened it so suddenly, that the poor old man could merely utter an audible groan, before Francisco's knee was placed against his back; and probably, in another minute, he would have been past recovery, if the

Marquis,

Marquis, who had started upon his feet, had not darted forward, and presented his pistol to the Prior's breast, crying, " If you make the least resistance, you are a dead man;" while Donald, who seemed inclined to shove his into Francisco's mouth, vowed he would blow his brains out, if he stirred an inch. Both, as if by clock-work, dropped their hold of the sash; and had they each received the contents of the weapons, which had so suddenly awed them into compliance, they could not have looked more ghastly. Mr. Langhton, meanwhile, fell struggling upon the steps of the altar, endeavouring to disentangle himself from the sash, which had so nearly deprived him of life and breath at once; and the next moment the Prior fell upon his knees, begging for mercy, and, as a proof of his repentance, he hastened to disengage the old gentleman from the string they had so dexterously caught him in; who, upon opening his eyes, and raising himself once more upon his knees,

caught

caught sight of his deliverers, standing over his now trembling assassins. The gratitude his venerable countenance expressed much more than repaid the Marquis for the essential service he had rendered him. He next seized hold of the sash, which he examined; but the shock he had undergone incapacitated him from rising.—“Wretch!” he exclaimed, addressing the kneeling Prior, who was endeavouring to fumble out his right-hand pocket, “raise both your hands above your head this moment, for you have other concealed weapons about you.”

He instantly obeyed his order; as the Marquis continued to point his pistol towards him with one hand, while he assisted Mr. Langhton to rise with the other, at the very moment the terrified Francisco fell all his length upon the pavement, in an absolute fainting-fit, when Donald, seizing the sash, said, “I will prevent your doing any more mischief;” instantly tying his two hands together.

Mr.

Mr. Langhton, who supported himself by leaning against our hero, now faintly exclaimed, "What can I have done, to have induced these wretches to conspire against my life!"

"You have, for years, my dear Sir, been nourishing a serpent in your bosom," was the reply.—"Talking of that, he may perhaps, ere now, be making his escape. Donald, have an eye to this man; his accomplice is incapacitated from giving him any assistance; and if this wretch attempts to move, shew him no mercy. Now, suffer me to support you into the parlour, my good Sir."

Mr. Langhton, of course, made no objection; and no sooner had he seated him in an arm-chair, than he rang the bell most violently. The servants who had attended mattins, had all returned to bed; but in less than a minute, two of the men entered the room.—"One of you remain with your master," cried the Marquis, "and let the
other

other follow me," running up stairs, hastening to the Father's room.

The door was fastened. He knocked; but no one answered; and the next moment he forced the lock, by the violent effort he made with his foot. The Father was not there.

"Remain where you are," he said to the servant, while he searched every corner of the apartment, looked up the chimney, and under the bed; and he would have searched the turret, had not the door leading thither been bolted on this side. He was therefore resolved to rouse all the servants, and send them after him, in every direction, when it occurred to him, that he might have been waiting the event at the bottom of his private staircase, and had been afraid to return to his own apartment. It was hardly sufficiently light to enable him to distinguish objects, even in the vaults; of course, the staircase leading down into the vestibule of the chapel derived very
little

Little light from the door being open. He, however, felt his way down, till he actually set his foot upon the monster he was seeking; who, either owing to the copious draughts he had taken the overnight, or to terror, and perhaps to both combined, was lying motionless at the foot of the stairs. He might, our hero thought, have put a period to his existence, or he might feign insensibility, in hopes of being able to make his escape during the bustle; but since he had found him, the Marquis felt more reconciled, and proceeded forward into the chapel, where he found Donald and his prisoners in the same situation as he had left them.—“ Rise, Sir,” said he, addressing the kneeling Prior; “ but keep your hands above your head, while I search your pockets.”

Incapable of resistance, even had it been likely to have proved of any avail, the wretched being obeyed in silence; and our hero pulled out a bottle of brandy,
some

some biscuits, and a large piece of cold meat ; and finally a large clasped knife.

“ I never meant to have raised that against Mr. Langhton, as I have a soul to be saved,” he stammered out ; “ though I did intend to have raised it against myself, had I not been prevented.”

“ And so have braved your Creator’s wrath, vile wretch ! but you may secure your provisions again ; your knife I shall not return ; so please to walk forward,” leading him into the parlour, where he had left Mr. Langhton, and sending the servant to assist in removing the Father and Francisco, desiring him to bring them into the room, as soon as they were sufficiently recovered to walk, as he wished to have them all under his own eye ; telling him where he had left his fellow-servant, and where he had found the Father, whom he hoped had merely, like his subordinate accomplices, fainted.

Mr. Langhton now caught our hero’s
hand,

hand, which he raised repeatedly to his lips, while, in broken accents, he called down blessings upon his head, unable, as he declared, to express his feelings towards him.

Thus were they situated, when Lady William, who had been first alarmed by the violent ringing of the bell, and then by hearing the Marquis break open the door of the vault, having hastily thrown on a few clothes, ran down the stairs, followed by her woman, and into the oriel parlour; where, seeing the Marquis standing with a pistol in one hand, while her father was holding the other, and a stranger in the background, whose pallid cheeks and shaking limbs, added to the time of the morning, led her to suppose he had been taken while committing some action "*that had no relish of salvation in it*;" which, of course, encreased her agitation, and rendered her unable to advance, or to inquire the meaning of what she saw.

"Do not be alarmed, my dear mother," cried the Marquis, who frequently gave her

her that title, and who now wished to raise her spirits, advancing to meet her, and taking her trembling hand, and leading her to a chair near her father; "everything shall be explained, and, I trust, very much to your satisfaction."

"That I am sure it will," cried Mr. Langhton, again seizing the Marquis's hand, who had now pocketed his defensive weapon; "since, but for the timely, nay almost miraculous, interposition of Lord Endermay, my dear daughter, I should, ere this, have been a corpse," glancing his eyes towards the trembling Prior, who had sunk into a chair, and covered his face with his hands.

Her father's explanation had not tended to calm Lady William's agitation, though she silently embraced both him and the Marquis, who, anxious to divert her attention, told her, that a glass of the same cordial she had once bestowed upon Father Benedetto would revive Mr. Langhton, and do him no harm. Instantly rising, without asking

asking another question, she went in quest of a bottle, and soon returned, followed by her maid, bringing glasses, which she filled for the two gentlemen. Mr. Langhton, with streaming eyes, offered up a fervent prayer for his youthful preserver, before he raised his to his lips; which having drank, he added, looking at his wondering and agitated daughter, "You do not know how much you and your children are indebted to this noble youth, since, had I fallen a victim to Father Benedetto's machinations, he would truly have revelled in the spoils of his iniquity."

CHAP. VII.

LADY William, whose astonishment was greatly encreased by her father's last speech, was turning towards the Marquis, to request an explanation, when the Father was supported into the room between Donald and Ashton, the grey-headed house-steward, appearing more dead than alive, and a prey to every dreadful sensation which must assail a human being in a similar situation. Francisco was close behind him, having been dragged along between the footman and coachman, his hands remaining bound with the sash he had intended for so very different a use.

“ You have searched these men's pockets,

I presume,

"I presume, Donald?" said the Marquis, pointing to a chair next the Prior's.

"We have, my Lord; but neither of them were prepared to act upon the defensive," leading the most guilty of the three towards the seat allotted him; while Francisco, who rather tottered than walked a few paces forward, fell upon his knees, begging for mercy, and declaring himself innocent, when compared to his master.

"Innocent!" cried our indignant hero, "can any circumstance exculpate you from having attempted to murder your benefactor? for such has been Mr. Langhton. But as we require time for reflection, my dear Sir, suppose we leave these wretches under Donald's and Ashton's care, while we deliberate, in another room, whether it will be best to take them immediately before Dr. Murray, the acting magistrate in this district, or whether we shall send them off at once to Lancaster."

"As I mean to be wholly guided by your advice, Marquis," was the reply, "I

merely request you would signify your orders to my household, as I shall ratify all you say or do."

"Then do not leave these wretches for a single moment, neither of you," said the Marquis, looking at Donald and Ashton; "the coachman may also remain with you, since, if they attempt to address each other in any language, let them be immediately separated. In a short time we will deliver them into the care of the proper officers. Meanwhile, let them be strictly guarded."

He then left the room, with Mr. Langhton and Lady William; and having seated themselves in the adjacent parlour, he briefly and candidly informed them both how he came to surmise the vile plot that was in agitation against Mr. Langhton; acknowledging, that Algernon had, in confidence, shewn him the peep-hole he had made, in consequence of his having suspected there was a lady concealed in the turret, at the time the Father had kept Julianio a prisoner there; and he had been tempted to watch
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the villain from thence, having, in consequence of his mysterious conduct the day before, entertained an apprehension that he had it in contemplation to make away with himself, little suspecting that he was planning the murder of his friend and generous patron.

Mr. Langhton, having returned his thanks, where they were most due, for the wonderful interposition of Providence in his behalf, made some very *apropos* remarks upon the concurrence of circumstances which had led to the discovery of the friar's villainous intentions; acknowledging, that as his life had been preserved, he wished the three wretches might be spared, to repent of their crimes; declaring nevertheless, that he would be entirely guided by our hero, who was much the best judge how they ought to proceed.

"I should feel no pleasure, believe me, Sir, in appearing as principal evidence against them," replied the Marquis; "but I have many serious matters to discuss with

the wretch whom I first secured, and who was once prior of a convent in Italy, and the Father, as I am convinced they have long been in a league to deceive you. I will therefore examine them separately, in your presence. As they have many crimes to answer for, besides their late horrid attempt, you must therefore make up your mind, Sir, and you, my dear mother, to hearing some very strange things, as I should wish you to be present while I cross-question the wretches, who are by no means aware that I am in possession of many of their iniquitous secrets. But, not to keep you in suspense, the Father's supposed nephew has long been under my protection. How and when we became acquainted, I will explain at some future time. I can only say, that he neither is, nor ever has been deranged; and that I have the sincerest regard for him, and am resolved to make the Father acknowledge who he really is, as I dare venture to take my oath, he is not his nephew; and as I know he

was

was brought up by the Prior who is now in the next room, with whom he came to England, and as I can also prove that he was trepanned into this house, under the most deceitful pretence, I am resolved to shew the culprits no mercy, if they are not perfectly sincere respecting him."

"I will second your benevolent intentions, to the utmost of my power, my kind preserver," rejoined Mr. Langhton; "indeed I have severely condemned myself for not having visited the poor youth, after I knew he was an inmate of the turret; but I had such an opinion of Father Benedetto, and he had so wrought upon my feelings, that I positively fancied I was doing a very meritorious action, at the time I was conniving at his wickedness. I am therefore as anxious as you can be, my Lord, to do the young man justice, and to make him all the amends in my power, for having suffered him perhaps to want common necessities, while my inmate."

"I am no less anxious to hear what that

wretched man has to alledge in excuse of his treatment of the poor youth," said Lady William.—“ But let us have some breakfast, and then no matter how soon the monks are interrogated. The letter the Father received yesterday had some reference to his nephew, had it not, Marquis?”

“ You have guessed very right; and being well aware that its contents were not of a pleasing nature, as it was written by one of the Crown lawyers, I was really, owing to my having a much better opinion of him than he deserved, induced to fear he meant to save me and that gentleman trouble, by making away with himself; but he wished to play a deeper game, and certainly thought he was taking a very sure method to avoid being called to an account by Mr. Langhton.”

Lady William having withdrawn to change her dress, breakfast was soon brought in, which she soon returned to make; and about eight o'clock, having finished their meal, Donald, whom our hero
knew

knew would like to be present, was ordered to bring in Francisco; Ashton was also desired to accompany them; and as he could write short-hand, he was to take down all that passed, which the Marquis thought might be a necessary precaution.

Lady William had desired her attendant would leave the bottle and glasses with the steward, when they quitted the room; who, having helped Donald, and taken a bumper himself, poured out a third for the Father, which he presented him, saying, "Though you are forbidden to speak, our good Lady thinks you seem in want of something to raise your spirits."

The old man put by the glass, in silence.

"As you please," cried Ashton, offering it to the Prior, who tossed it off, saying, "I only wish it was poison, that I might be the sooner out of my misery."

The Father gave him a look; but whether of reproach, or to awe him into silence, the servants could not decide. Francisco readily followed his example, but without

venturing to speak; and neither of the prisoners had again ventured to converse. Ashton and Donald did so in a low voice, till they were summoned to bring Francisco into the next room by a footman, who was to remain upon guard during their absence. The wretched being preceded the steward and valet into the best parlour, where Lady William was sitting, between the Marquis and her father. Our hero desired him to advance, saying, "We merely wish to hear at whose instigation you undertook to murder Mr. Langhton, before you are carried before Dr. Murray, who will, of course, commit you to the county gaol, to be tried, at the ensuing assizes, for your life; and as I shall, of course, be the principal evidence against you, I think I may venture to affirm, that you will be condemned to die by the hand of the executioner. Yet Mr. Langhton is so mercifully inclined, and so anxious to return good for evil, that if you are perfectly sincere in your answers to various questions I have to ask you, we may both
be

be induced so to soften down our evidence, as to save your worthless life, by way of affording you a longer time for repentance. I therefore again ask, at whose instigation did you undertake to murder your benefactor?"

The trembling wretch fell upon his knees, imploring their mercy, in the most abject manner, and declaring that he would not even attempt to deceive them; and, as they had expected, acknowledged that the Father had drawn him on, by bribes, and promises of future absolution, to endanger both his life and soul.

"What bribe did you receive?" asked the Marquis.

"A thousand golden guineas, my Lord; and they are locked up in my chest, as I would have both the money and conditional absolution before I made the attempt; and with that sum, I knew I could have lived like a prince in Italy; but he promised me five hundred more, if all passed off quietly, and

no suspicions respecting how Mr. Langhton came by his death ensued."

"You meant, then, to return to Italy, admitting all had succeeded as you hoped and expected?"

"We were all three to have left England together, my Lord, as soon as the Father had settled his affairs; and as he was nominated one of Mr. Langhton's executors, he told me and Mr. Mordini, we hoped to have been off in a month."

"Then was it merely to obtain possession of the legacy Mr. Langhton had, of course, bequeathed him, that induced the Father to hire you to murder him?"

"I hardly know, my Lord. I am not in all his secrets; but I know he has received intelligence respecting his late prisoner, and that, I believe, made him resolve to get rid of his patron."

"I believe you are right in your conjectures; so now tell me all you know about his late prisoner; and remember, as
you

you hope for mercy, to be sincere. Was he the Father's nephew? and was he, as he reported, insane?"

"I am certain he was as much in his senses, during the whole time he was under my care, as you are at this moment, my Lord; nor do I believe he was at all related to my master. Why he chose to keep him confined, I never could absolutely fathom; and I declare, as I hope for that mercy you have promised me, I do not know who he really is. The Father alone can satisfy you upon that point."

"What do you know of Mordini, who was once a monk, like your master?"

"Very little, my Lord. I never saw him till about two months ago, when he was brought in privately through the chapel; since which, he has sometimes been at the Priory, and sometimes at Madame de La Tour's, at Hilton; but he never ventured out, except by night; and the Father merely told me he was under a cloud. I was not much surprised, therefore, when I found

he was to take an active part in our vile plot, as I am convinced that it had long been settled to make away with Mr. Langhton, since every arrangement for the purpose was made soon after Mordini's arrival in the neighbourhood. The letter my master received yesterday merely hastened the event. The sash was thought of, because some emperor has lately been strangled in a similar manner, and it was not likely to leave any mark, since we hoped, when Mr. Langhton was found dead, that it would be supposed he went off in a fit. The Father, as agreed upon, feigned illness, that he might be the first to leave the chapel, and to prevent its being even surmised that he had been at all accessory to his patron's death, admitting any suspicions did arise as to how he came by it; since I was to have returned to my own room, after letting Mordini out through the private door leading into the lane, as he was to have made the best of his way to London, to have provided passports, under some false pretence,

pretence, to enable us to leave the kingdom, as my master was anxious to turn his back upon England, I know ; since he has frequently said, that rather than be obliged to declare who Juliano really was, and why he had so strictly confined him, he would forego the legacy he expected to receive upon Mr. Langhton's death, having already more than enough to place him much above want, thanks to that gentleman's charitable disposition, as he hoarded every farthing he received from him to distribute among the emigrant priests, poorer Catholics, and the heretic poor in this neighbourhood, always averring, that charity began at home."

"Miserable, mistaken wretch!" cried the angry Mr. Langhton ; "no wonder he was able to bribe so high, to have me assassinated, as he has been my almoner for years ; and, of late, the persecutions the Catholic priests have met with abroad having driven them to England, he has been more than ever pressing me for money to
relieve

relieve their wants; frequently making use of the name of the excellent Bishop de St. Pol de Leon, doubtless without his knowledge; still, I hope I can with truth declare, I forgive him, though he must have rendered me an object of hatred in the neighbourhood, and has very probably, in my name, refused assistance to many deserving Catholics."

"I make no doubt of his having made most unwarrantable use of the unlimited power you, Sir, with the best intentions, gave him," rejoined the Marquis; "but as I believe this man has, for once, been very sincere, I think we may dismiss him. Take him back, Donald, and bring in Mordini; but remember, Francisco, if you, either by words or signs, endeavour to address your master, till you have my permission so to do, you forfeit every hope of my favour."

"I will even turn my back upon him, my Lord, as I know you will not deceive me; and he certainly has, more than once;

to

to you alone, therefore, do I now look up with hope," leaving the room with the valet, who returned almost immediately with the Prior, who having, by his orders, advanced very near our hero, he first inquired who he was?

"An Italian by birth, my Lord."

"Thank God you are not a British subject," was the reply.—"Now, be pleased to tell me what induced you to enter into a conspiracy to murder Mr. Langhton?"

The Prior paused.

"An open confession may induce us not to deliver you into the hands of justice; but the least prevarication will effectually seal your doom. How long have you been in England?"

"I came over in 1795, my Lord."

"I know you did. How long have you lodged at No. —, in — Street, Somers Town?"

This question evidently startled him, and he again paused.

"Do

“Do not attempt to prevaricate, since, should your memory fail you, I can set it right with respect to dates.”

“I was only reflecting, my Lord. I have resided about ten months in the house you mention. I lived at Walworth before.”

“So I have been told. But you proposed returning to Somers Town when you went from hence, as you are expected there, to my certain knowledge?”

“I believe I may; though my return thither depended upon circumstances.”

“You are right, as you had not probably foreseen that you would be taken, while making an attempt to murder that gentleman. You have, I presume, seen the letter Father B. received yesterday, respecting the youth who made his escape from hence, last autumn, whom he styles his nephew, and represents as being deranged in his mind?”

The monk appeared to stand amazed, since it was evident the Marquis knew of
that

that letter. Thinking, however, it might be most prudent to be sincere, as he was well aware of the rank and power of his interrogator, he acknowledged he had seen the letter in question.

“ Then pray tell me who the young man really is, whom you, under pretence of regard for him, induced to accompany you to England, where you landed at Bristol, and where you spent three days at the Rummer Tavern in that city, at the expiration of which, having doubtless received your final instructions from your worthy coadjutor in iniquity, you proceeded across the country to Manchester, and, at the ——— Inn there, you were met by Father Benedetto, to whom you delivered up your unsuspecting companion, who was, in consequence, trepanned into this house, where he was closely confined, and from whence he was, by the interposition of Providence, finally enabled to make his escape, to the great discomfiture of his wicked gaoler and yourself?”

To

To have attempted to contradict this true statement of facts, the Prior felt would be completely absurd, since the Marquis must have learnt some of the circumstances from Juliano himself; who might, should he prove obstinate, be confronted with him. Various recollections, and some degree of remorse, induced him to give way to a flood of tears. Having suffered him to recover some degree of composure, our hero, who was extremely impatient to have his suspicions confirmed, again inquired, though in a gentler tone, who Juliano really was? exhorting him to be sincere, as he hoped for that mercy they should, in that case, feel inclined to shew him.

“As I do hope for mercy, my Lord, I do not exactly know, which must strike you as very extraordinary; but Father Benedetto has never, I am convinced, told me the exact truth, with respect to that fine youth. He alone, therefore, can satisfy your very natural curiosity. Believe me, I have often reproached myself with having
delivered

delivered him into his hands, since I once, nay I do still feel the sincerest regard for that amiable young fellow; and sincerely did I rejoice when I learnt that he was living; nay, I solemnly declare, I made the Father promise to provide for all his future wants, before I absolutely agreed to enter into his iniquitous plan; since no one knows better than I do how truly deserving he ever has been of Fortune's favours. He once considered me in the light of a father—he must now consider me in the light of a monster, as I have certainly proved his most bitter enemy,” again shedding tears.

“Possibly you may, unintentionally I will allow, have done him an essential service, by bringing him to England,” rejoined the Marquis, who was extremely pleased to hear him thus do justice to the many virtues and amiable qualities of his loved *protégée*.

“Pray God I may have been so fortunate,” hastily resumed the Prior.

“I trust

“ I trust you will find my words true,” was the reply. “ Meanwhile, oblige me, by detailing when, where, and by whom, Juliano was first placed under your care?”

“ I can have no objection, my Lord.— Father Benedetto and I were early friends, and, at an early age, we both devoted ourselves to the church. He soon followed his present patron to England; but various reasons induced him to keep up a regular correspondence with me, since he had two natural children, whom he left in Italy, and of whom he could only hear through my means. For many years after his arrival in England, I hope that he led a very pious life; and very probably he might do so; but, about two-and-twenty years ago, he wrote me word, that he had been unfortunate enough to connect himself with a young woman in this neighbourhood, who was likely to give birth to another natural child; and as Mr. Langhton had outlived his own passions, he could make no allowances for the frailty of human nature, therefore

would

would doubtless discard him, should he even suspect that he had been guilty of what he would deem such an enormous crime. He therefore requested, that I would take charge of it, and, if it proved a boy, bring him up for a monk; if a girl, for a nun; both his former children having taken their vows at an early age. I made no scruple of promising to oblige him, if, as he proposed, he could send it by sea to Leghorn, under the care of a proper nurse, promising to make proper arrangements for its reception. I was as good as my word, as I had apartments prepared at a vine-dresser's, in the immediate vicinity of the monastery, for the nurse and child: and in a very short time, an elderly woman and a very fine boy, landed at Leghorn, whither I had sent Ludovico, the vine-dresser, to give them the meeting. That child was Juliano, my Lord. His nurse, I understood, was his grandmother. She did not long survive the fatigue of so long a journey."

This

This was said in a faltering accent. And he thus proceeded, after a momentary pause, for which his auditors perfectly accounted, as they made no doubt the poor woman's death had been hastened by some indirect means.

“A very worthy Italian woman, whom I had long known, upon her demise, took charge of the child, who must, ere now, be as fine a young fellow as any in England. You, who must have seen him, my Lord, must know I speak my real thoughts, when I solemnly declare, that your countenance, at times, reminds me of him; and I should suppose he is nearly of your stature.”

“I give you credit for your remarks,” rejoined the Marquis, while the monk proceeded:

“Possibly I do not make myself very clear, since, though I wish to be very particular, many things may escape me, owing to the confused state of my mind.—At seven years old, Juliano became an inmate of our monastery; and I undertook to instruct him

him in the various branches of learning I thought necessary for his education. Nature had been so bountiful to him, that my task was very easy. But, not to dwell upon the few uninteresting incidents which occurred while he was under my care, in the year 1795, owing to the progress the French army was making in Italy, I wrote to Father Benedetto (who had been very punctual in his remittances for his son's board), to give him notice, that I had it in contemplation to embark for England, and to make Giuliano the companion of my flight. Rather contrary to my expectations, he encouraged the notion, desiring me to steer my course for Bristol, if possible, from whence I might write him notice of my arrival, as he thought he could so manage matters, as to get his son (as he persisted in styling Giuliano) received at Langhton Priory, as a youth of family, who was rather deranged, but who would, of course, meet every indulgence, under that plea; since, were he to declare the truth to his bigotted

patron, as he styled Mr. Langhton, he should certainly forfeit his esteem, and might lose his situation, which would effectually prevent him from doing anything more for me, whom self-interest rendered subservient to all his wishes.

“ Probably you already know, my Lord, how we managed to decoy the unsuspecting youth hither, and all that he suffered, in consequence, which I was not absolutely aware of, till very lately, and which has led me to suspect he is not the son of his greatest persecutor, who has almost as good as acknowledged, in his unguarded moments, that he has deceived me in some respects. He was, as you already doubtless know, greatly alarmed, when he contrived to make his escape, and wrote to me, to request I would join him here, as soon as possible. I did as he desired, at every risk; and I know his greatest dread was, that you, my Lord, should ever stumble upon the poor fugitive, as he has often declared, that he was resolved, at every risk, should he
ever

ever be forthcoming, to prevent your meeting; and, by way of guarding against every future evil, he, by degrees, sounded me respecting getting rid of Mr. Langhton; since, if he was but removed, he should have comparatively nothing to dread, and would hold such a check upon his successor, that he should always be able to make his own terms with him. I need not add, that I suffered myself to be bribed to second his nefarious views; but I hope your Lordship, and you, Sir, against whom I have most sinned, will please to remember, that I was entirely dependent upon his bounty, and even more at his mercy than Francisco, which I may plead in extenuation of my crime, though I acknowledge I have sinned almost beyond forgiveness."

"Should Father Benedetto be as candid as I believe you have been," replied the Marquis, "Mr. Langhton and myself may be induced to conceal your joint crime; but should he prove obstinate, we shall be under the necessity of carrying you before

a magistrate. I need not dwell upon what must be the consequence of our taking such a step; but I still hope he will fully satisfy me respecting Juliano, as I shall make his so doing the price of his pardon."

The Prior hoped he would declare the truth, bestowing various deserved eulogiums upon the youth he had decoyed into his power, whom he repeatedly declared he still loved as much as he could have done a son of his own.

Lady William and Mr. Langhton both felt more than ever interested in the cause of the fugitive, and repeatedly told our hero, that they were all anxiety to see him.

"I hope you soon will," was the reply, "and that you will like him as much as I do, since, were he my brother, I could not be more attached to him. I will see you again, Mordini, after I have examined your friend, whom I think more guilty than yourself. Judge, therefore, in what estimation I hold him.—Take the Prior into the other room, Donald, and bring forward

forward the wretch whom I am most anxious to examine."

The valet, who was scarcely less anxious to have the mystery respecting Julianò cleared up, hastened to obey him, calling out, as he entered the adjacent parlour, "Now, monster, it is your turn."

This exclamation led the Father to suppose his accomplices had endeavoured to exculpate themselves at his expence; and he had his doubts whether the Prior might not be tempted to turn king's evidence; in which case, he was well aware nothing could save him from the gallows, as he was but too sensible of the enormity of his guilt. He made an attempt to rise, but fell back in his chair, appearing to gasp for breath.

"I will assist you," said Donald, advancing for that purpose; "though, I can suppose, you would deem immediate death a blessing. However, it is fit you should confess your sins first; that once done, no matter

how soon you are turned over to the hangman."

Unable to reply, the terrified being suffered himself to be dragged along, scarcely knowing which way he went. As he was leaving the room, the Prior exclaimed, in very good English, "As you hope for mercy, Father Benedetto, answer every question that may be asked you truly and sincerely, since you are going to appear before lenient judges, and who are more in your secrets than you may suppose."

The Father made no reply, except a deep groan might be deemed one; and the footman closed the door after him.

CHAP. VIII.

DURING the interval, the Marquis, who had risen to stretch his legs, asked Mr. Langhton if he wished to see the Father *tête-à-tête* before he was publicly examined?

“By no means, my kind friend; indeed I dare not trust myself alone with him. Surely, for his own sake, he will acknowledge who Julianio really is.”

“So amiable a young man never can be his son,” cried Lady William.

“He has as good as acknowledged he was not, Mordini told us,” resumed the Marquis. “I only hope he will convince me that the suspicions which I have long

entertained are not unfounded. But hush, here he comes," resuming his seat.

The Father being led in, our hero desired Ashton to place a chair for him, telling him to collect himself—they were in no hurry—they only required him to be perfectly sincere:

This gentle exordium rather revived the old sinner's spirits, and, having taken his seat, bowed, in token of acquiescence to his Lordship's requisition; who thus proceeded:

"To accuse you of having, with unparalleled ingratitude, conspired against the life of your generous benefactor, would be merely delaying time; nor need I ask why you formed so wicked an intention, as we already know what induced you to enter into so diabolical a league—It was to prevent his ever discovering how basely you had deceived him respecting Juliano, whom you had doomed to a still more cruel, since more lingering, death, as you wished him to have perished with cold or hunger. Thanks to an excellent constitution, and to
the

the timely interference of Providence; your vile intention was rendered abortive; though the unfortunate youth was a mere skeleton when he escaped from hence; and had he died, I would have had you taken up, and tried for his murder, as I have long been in habits of intimacy with him.—You may well start! as you must now guess that I am convinced he is neither your nephew, as you styled him, nor your son, as you told Mordini; therefore, I now solemnly require you to declare, who he is—why you confined him—and every particular I may wish to know respecting him? If you do accede to these lenient proposals, we may be inclined to allow you to hide your guilty head in some obscure retreat, during the remainder of your wretched life. This letter,” taking one out of his pocket-book, and putting it into the friar’s hand, “is an exact copy of the one you received yesterday from counsellor ———, whom the Earl of Algernon and myself have employed to assert the injured youth’s rights.

I leave you to guess why we have felt ourselves so strongly interested in his behalf. That he was born in England, you certainly will not attempt to confute, after what Mordini has acknowledged; and as I am convinced Madame de La Tour is in many, if not all of your secrets, I shall give immediate orders to have her secured. I am thus candid with you, to convince you that I do not wish to take you by surprise. Therefore, let me hope, for your own sake, that you will be inclined to follow my example."

"I will throw myself entirely upon your Lordship's mercy. The commission of one great crime has led me on to think even lightly of murder; as I do acknowledge, that the supposed Juliano is neither my nephew nor my son, as you have too truly surmised.—Will you promise to spare my life, if I reveal who he really is? else I may as well still leave you in doubt respecting him."

"May not Mordini know more than you
are

are aware of, Father, and may not Madame de La Tour betray your confidence? However, I repeat my promise—Your life shall be spared, and you and your accomplices shall be allowed to leave the kingdom together; nay, more, you shall be suffered to carry with you the money you have, under so many false pretences, extorted from Mr. Langhton, if you instantly declare who Giuliano is; else I will carry you immediately before Dr. Murray; therefore, if you are inclined to save me that trouble, be brief, and sincere.”

“I will—I will, my Lord Marquis, at every risk, I will unburthen my conscience. About three-and-twenty years ago, I had the misfortune to connect myself with a very beautiful forward young girl, an Irish-woman, and a Catholic, who resided with her mother, in a lone house between here and Highwood. I was her confessor, and she sometimes came to chapel here. Suffice it to say, that after a time she proved with child. For fear of such an event occurring,

she had given out, when our intimacy commenced, that her husband, whom she pretended had been quartered at Preston, was gone abroad with his regiment. The story passed current; and, under pretence of following him to the West Indies, I meant after a time to send her to France. Before, however, she lay in, Lady William Albany returned to the Priory. She was in a very weak state of health, as she must remember, and Mr. Langhton was, in consequence, rather averse to her suckling her infant, as she had intended. I of course sided with him in opinion, wishing to place my Irish mistress in the family as wet-nurse.

“ I need not tell your Ladyship, nor repeat to you, Sir,” looking at Mr. Langhton, “ the story I told, at the time, to bring my plan to bear. Suffice it to say, that she was engaged, and I felt a great weight taken off my hands. It, however, so happened, that she only laid in five days before her Ladyship; of course, she was unable to be in waiting when wanted at the Priory; but

as

as her Ladyship's son seemed to pine for the breast, Mrs. Stewart, who was then living, conveyed him in the carriage, the morning after he was born, to the cottage of his appointed nurse, under whose care she left him, as her mother promised to pay every attention to him, and to wean her grandson, as had been agreed upon, immediately; but no sooner was she gone, than she resolved, as at that age there was very little difference in the infants, to exchange the children; but durst not do so till she had consulted me; and, as I firmly resolved to provide for all the wants of the real Algernon Langhton Albany, as I christened him, soon after his birth, I readily came into the plan, wishing, as well as his mother, to secure the Langhton estates to our own son.

“ Nothing intervened to prevent the success of our plan, as Lady William continued so low and weak, and was thought to be in so dangerous a way, that Mrs. Stewart contented herself with my daily reports

reports of the child's health, which were always very favourable ; and as she did not again see the infant for upwards of a week, when it was of course adorned in the clothes which had been provided for her Ladyship's, whose son had been removed into the neighbourhood, a woman having readily undertaken to suckle it, no one suspected the deceit that had been practised ; and the moment Jane Killarney was able to come to the Priory with the supposed heir, I sent her mother and the real one off to Manchester, where I placed her in an obscure lodging, till I had settled matters for her removal to Italy. The Prior has probably informed you of my application to him, and the result."

"He has," said the Marquis, who now ventured to look at Lady William and Mr. Langhton, who were, having been first breathless with anxiety, now lost in amazement, hardly appearing to credit the Father's assertions—"Then you do solemnly declare, that the youth who was placed under the
Prior's

Prior's care, and finally confined in the turret-chamber here, and who has hitherto borne the name of Juliano," added our hero, in an impressive tone, "is the son of my late father, the grandson of Mr. Langhton, and my brother?"

"I will affirm it upon oath, if you any longer doubt my assertions, my Lord."

"May the Almighty forgive your manifold sins and wickedness," fervently ejaculated Mr. Langhton, "since it seems you have substituted your illegitimate child, in the place of my much-wronged grandson."

Lady William gave way to a violent flood of tears, which certainly relieved her almost bursting heart. The Marquis, in the most affectionate manner, endeavoured to sooth her into composure, assuring her, that his brother's astonishing resemblance to the late Lord William had first led him to suspect the shameful deception which had been practised with respect to the children. He therefore hoped, that she would rejoice at the recent discovery, which had restored

to

to her a son, of whom any parent might be proud. At all events, he should henceforth feel extremely proud of a brother, whose very enemies could not refrain from speaking in his praise.—“ At present,” he went on, “ he is perfectly ignorant of the suspicions my uncle and myself have long entertained, since we dared not give him hopes, which we were not certain would ever be realized ; but sincerely do I rejoice, for all our sakes, that the Father has acknowledged he is an Albany.”

This animated speech, in behalf of a brother, whom he feared would be rather considered as an intruder in the Langhton family, seemed to rouse the almost suspended faculties of Lady William, who, pressing his hand, said, “ My dear Marquis, you mistake my feelings, since, believe me, I rejoice as much as you can do at the recent discovery, as I have never, I may now acknowledge, felt proud of my supposed son ; still, I cannot help pitying him, as he is not to blame for having usurped the place :

place of another ; and I shall always feel a degree of regard for the poor fellow, who, I believe, loves me as a parent ; still, I am all impatience to embrace my own child, whose likeness to his father, and unmerited sufferings, will greatly endear to me. If I can, I will endeavour to forgive the man who has treated him so basely ; though, from what you said, I fear he meant to shorten his existence, in addition to which he wished to murder my father, to conceal his numerous crimes. I am therefore truly happy that time will be allowed him for repentance."

Even the Father's flinty heart was softened by this speech, since he wept like a child, acknowledging that he was undeserving of their lenity.

" You have fulfilled the conditions imposed upon you, Father," rejoined the Marquis ; " but I feel authorised to inquire, where the mother of your son now resides, if she has not, like her mother, paid the debt of nature ?"

After

After a few moments pause, he said, "At Hilton, my Lord."

"I guessed as much," was the reply; "as I presume you did, my dear mother?"

"No, positively."

"Nor can I hardly credit the assertion," cried Mr. Langhton—"Can Madame de La Tour have ever resided here, in the capacity of wet-nurse to my supposed grandson, who might well not resemble any of his family?"

"She is the identical Jane Killarney, as I can easily prove, with whom, as I have already confessed, I had previously cohabited, and whom, instead of sending to Ireland, as I told Lady William, to join her mother and son, I sent to France, in consequence of her again proving with child by me, and placed her under the protection of Mr. Belthorpe, who was just nominated confessor to the English convent of Pontoise, and where I presumed she would readily be received, in capacity of lay-sister. In this, however, I was disappointed; but

Belthorpe.

Belthorpe placed her, at my expence, in another monastery, as soon as she had lain in of Pauline."

"Of Pauline!" cried our hero, with a look expressive of horror—"Then how dared you suffer your son to form any acquaintance with his sister, situated as they both were? or did you tell him how nearly they were related?"

"Never, I solemnly declare, my Lord."

"Then you were the more to blame, since, to my certain knowledge, they are now living together as man and wife."

The consternation our hero's speech occasioned, may be more easily imagined than described.

"Living together as man and wife!" Mr. Langhton at last repeated—"What have not you and that vile woman to answer for, wretch! if they were, as you say, ignorant of their consanguinity? Do you suppose they are actually married, Marquis?"

Our hero briefly repeated when and
where

where he had seen Pauline, the inquiries he had made in consequence, not omitting what had passed between him and Belthorpe; and the lame excuses Algernon, or rather Benedict, as he had been christened, had made, for having formed such a connexion.

“I am more than ever inclined to bless God that he is not my grandson,” cried Mr. Langhton; “since, with such principles, he would have brought shame and disgrace upon his family and connexions.”

It may be supposed that such a convincing proof of his depravity lowered him very much in Lady William’s esteem, though she was infinitely more indulgent towards the indiscretions of youth than her father was inclined to be. She therefore observed; “That as the young people were really ignorant of their relationship, and had very imprudently been thrown into each other’s way, they were not near so criminal as those who had led them into temptation.”

Of this the Father seemed perfectly sensible; and certainly seemed extremely shocked at this fresh discovery.

“ Since Belthorpe was in so many of your secrets, Father,” cried Mr. Langhton, “ pray, was he to have shared in the spoils you hoped to secure by my death?”

The Father protested he did not know of the deception that had been practised respecting Mr. Langhton’s grandson, having merely undertaken the care of Jane Killarney, and to provide for her infant, to oblige him; and when the French revolution obliged him to leave France, he had, as they were both living, thought it his duty to make Jane and her daughter the companions of his flight. The former had lived in the capacity of attendant to a Madame de La Tour, who was a boarder in the same convent, for some years previous to the Revolution, which had induced her to assume the name; and he had settled them at Hilton, to avoid being under the necessity of making them a large allowance.

“ And

“And were you not afraid of me, or some of the household, recognising her features?” asked Lady William.

“By no means. When she inhabited the Priory, she was a blooming, delicate young girl, in her twentieth year, and dressed in the simplest style; but, during her residence abroad, she had grown extremely fat, her features had also greatly altered, and, as I positively did not know her myself when I first saw her, I had no fears of your recollecting her, as she had entirely lost her Irish accent, nay, had almost forgot her English, and dressed, besides, in a very different manner; and I need not add that your Ladyship was once more my dupe, nor how I contrived to reward Belthorpe for his past services, by placing him as private tutor to my son, who by no means answered my expectations, and whom I had resolved to keep in greater awe, in future, by revealing the secret of his birth to him; and it seems he has already thrown off the mask he did wear

under my eyes, probably with the connivance of his tutor, who, I dare say, contrived Pauline's elopement, and their future meeting, to ingratiate himself with the heir of Langhton Priory."

"I fancy you are right in your conjectures, Father," said the Marquis, "as I had formed similar suspicions. We must, however, send for Jane Killarney, Mr. Langhton, as we cannot have too positive proof respecting the late infamous deception."

"Surely not, my Lord; though nothing more is wanting to convince me how basely I have been imposed upon."

"Nor me," cried Lady William.

The Father, however, wrote a few lines to his female accomplice, merely to inform her that all was discovered, and to exhort her to make as sincere a confession as he had done, as the only means of preserving their joint lives. This he signed, and delivered to our hero, who desired him to deliver up all his keys, which should be returned him, if it was not thought necessary

sary to examine his papers, after they had heard Jane's story, and to retire to his own room, as he could not be suffered to have any intercourse with Mordini and Francisco, till they had settled how they were all three to be disposed of; not that they feared his making his escape, since he could not leave the kingdom without a passport; still it was necessary that he should, for the present, confine himself to his own room; whither Donald attended him, who, after securing every door, except the one leading to the turret, telling him, "He would forgive him if he made his escape from thence, as Mr. Albany had done," he left him to his meditations. The Prior and Francisco were secured in a lower room; and Donald, having taken some refreshment, was sent, in Mr. Langhton's coach, for Jane Killarney.

During his absence, Mr. Langhton and Lady William asked our hero a thousand questions respecting the real Algernon; and, by way of interesting them still more
in

in his favour, the Marquis briefly related what had first induced him to visit the turret; how he, or rather Donald, had managed to effect his escape, unknown to the family; dwelling, with great feeling, upon his surprise, when he perceived the wonderful likeness he bore his late father, which had induced him to resolve to unmask Father Benedetto, whom he had immediately suspected had substituted a child or relation of his own in his place.

Mr. Langhton could only declare, that his liberation was evidently the work of Heaven; and bless God that the Marquis was thus rendered instrumental in the preservation of a brother, for whom he avowed the most sincere regard.

Lady William was all impatience to see him, since he must be a most amiable, interesting youth, to have made himself such friends, while labouring under such great disadvantages. The Marquis was promising to send Donald for him and Lord Algernon, who was no less interested in his nephew's welfare,

welfare, and who certainly ought to be consulted respecting the disposal of the three culprits, when they heard the coach drive into the court; and, in another minute, Donald led, or rather dragged, the terrified Jane Killarney into the parlour, who had been so alarmed when informed why she had been so hastily summoned, that she was hardly able to implore the mercy of Lady William.

Out of delicacy, our hero dismissed Donald, telling him he must prepare to set out for London very speedily—He bowed, and withdrew. Lady William made the wretched woman swallow some drops in water, and a shower of tears having greatly relieved her, the Marquis, in as few words as possible, related the events of the morning, giving her to understand, that she was so implicated in the Father's criminal intentions, a sincere avowal of her repeated deceptions could alone prevent her from being sent to prison.—“Do you therefore acknowledge, that the supposed Algernon
Albany

Albany is your son, by Father Benedetto, and that the real Algernon was sent to Italy, under your mother's care?"

As they expected, she readily confirmed the truth of her paramour's assertion.

The Marquis next told her when and where he had seen her daughter, and what had proved the dreadful consequence of her having brought her up in ignorance of her relationship to the supposed Mr. Albany.

She appeared nearly as much shocked as the Father had seemed when he heard of the criminal intercourse subsisting between her children; but hoped she might plead, in extenuation of her error in having kept her daughter in ignorance how nearly she was related to her brother, that she was not Father Benedetto's child.

"Thank God!" cried the Marquis—"Then who were her parents? This seems indeed a day of discoveries."

"She is my daughter, by Mr. Belthorpe, my Lord," she faltered out.

“ By Mr. Belthorpe ! ” cried the more and more scandalized Mr. Langhton—“ And does that lessen the crime, misguided wretch ! which your miserable children have unknowingly been guilty of ? But in whom, oh Lord ! shall I dare, in future, to put any trust ? Is the Father aware of this circumstance ? He has, as the Marquis has told you, acknowledged having sent you abroad, because you were again with child by him.”

“ He told you truth, Sir ; but owing to my journey, and fretting at leaving England, I miscarried of a second son, soon after my arrival in France. Mr. Belthorpe, who was extremely kind to me, did not, however, write the Father word what had occurred, as it might have induced him to lessen the allowance he had promised to make me, if he supposed the child was no more ; and before he expected I should lay in, I was again in the family-way, by Mr. Belthorpe, who, in consequence, wrote him, at the proper time, that I was safely delivered of
a fine

a fine girl, as it seemed most likely my next child would be a female, having had two boys; and if not, as I never intended to return to England, we hoped to be able to deceive him into maintaining the infant, which, as we had hoped, proved a girl, the very Pauline who returned with me to England; and we had no difficulty in making the Father believe that I was a boarder in one convent, and the child in another, while we inhabited a small house at Pontoise, very near the abbey where Mr. Belthorpe resided, till the French revolution obliged us to seek our safety in flight; and we applied, of course, to the Father, who placed me and Pauline at Hilton."

"We know all that he did when you returned to England," said the Marquis; "but does Mr. Belthorpe know that his pupil was your son by the Father?"

"He does not, my Lord. The Father made me swear such an oath never to reveal that circumstance, except by his permission."

mission, that I never have, to any living soul, before to-day."

"That renders him the more excusable for having connived at the horrid connexion your children have formed; indeed, it now strikes me that they are married, since I can hardly suppose he would have wished his daughter should merely have been his pupil's mistress."

"I am convinced he would not, my Lord, though he has frequently expressed a wish to bring about a match between them; but I always set my face against his proposal, under pretence of fearing to offend the Father and Mr. Langhton; but I own I greatly feared he or his pupil were concerned in Pauline's elopement, though I sometimes hoped that she had gone off with some other admirer, as that would have effectually prevented her from forming the connexion I dreaded."

"I am willing to believe you were in some respects innocent of having connived

at

at your daughter's elopement ; but did you know that my brother was a prisoner in his grandfather's house ?”

“ I did not, my Lord, as I hope for mercy, I thought he had been long since dead, till the Father was obliged, in self-defence, to tell me how he had kept him confined, when he made his escape from hence, as he dreaded my dropping an unguarded word respecting him before Mr. Belthorpe. He had hoped he would have died a natural death, when he might have been regularly buried, without its being ever discovered that he was not, as he had represented him to Mr. Langhton, insane ; and ever since he went from hence, he has flattered himself that he had either died in obscurity, or that he had found means to return to Italy. I was not so sanguine in my expectations ; and yesterday, probably you already know, my Lord, he received a letter from some counsellor, which put him into a terrible flurry, and made him hasten to my house, where his friend Mr. Mordini was, whom

he invited to sup with him at the Priory, as something must be done immediately, he said. Little did I suspect what they meant to do, or I am sure I would 'have given you notice, Sir, of their wicked intentions."

"No doubt," said Mr. Langhton, in an ironical tone; "but pray, if we do feel inclined to save your worthless life, and that of all your guilty accomplices, what do you propose doing with your daughter, whom I shall insist upon your immediately separating from your son, whom I shall place above want, since he has, in many respects, erred innocently, and has been brought up with great expectations?"

"You are very kind, Sir, and I will be regulated entirely by your orders."

"Then I wish I could instruct you how to make your peace with Heaven; for great have been your crimes."

She wept bitterly, and was certainly not sparing of her self-reproaches, when, in consequence of a sudden thought, our hero interrupted

interrupted her discourse, by asking, whether she remembered having been taken extremely ill one day last November, which had induced her daughter to send a note to the Priory, requesting to see the Father immediately?

She recollected the circumstance.

“And were you really as ill as you represented yourself to be?”

“I had purposely taken an emetic, my Lord; and having had a hare the day before, I saved the blood, which deceived the Father into a belief that I had been in some danger.”

“You succeeded in alarming him, I make no doubt, as he had some reason to fear you might repent upon your deathbed; but you had resolved, in conjunction with some other person, to send him first to answer for your joint sins.”

She looked down, and, after a pause of irresolution, said, “I agree I acted by Mr. Belthorpe’s advice; but he did not tell me

what was likely to be the result of my sending for the Father."

"Now, do not affect ignorance.—You must know who attacked him, with an intent to murder him, that evening?"

"I declare I am not certain who it was, my Lord; though I certainly had my suspicions."

"Upon whom did they fall?"

"Why, you must know, my Lord, that having, by mere chance, stumbled upon a relative of mine, an Irishman, who worked for a manufacturer at Manchester, I, as was very natural, wishing to hear about my family, asked him to come and see me now and then, telling him I had married abroad, and that I passed for a Frenchwoman; and he must not blow my secret, as it would reduce me to my former indigence; and as he desired no better than to share my good fortune, he was as discreet as I could have wished. But one day, as ill luck would have it; the Father popt upon us unawares,

unawares, and half affronted him, besides abusing me for imprudence. Patrick wished to defend me; and this only made bad worse, as the friar set off in a huff; and before I could get rid of Pat, Mr. Belthorpe joined us; and he sided with my relation, whom he often contrived to meet after that, and whom I firmly believe was the person who way-laid the Fâther, or else it was an emigrant priest, who was also at Belthorpe's beck and call, who was very anxious to get rid of his rival at the Priory. And as I have now candidly confessed all my crimes, I hope, my Lord, I shall not be reduced to to a workhouse in my old age."

"No matter how much you suffer in this world," said Mr. Langhton, "since it may the better prepare you for another. We shall, however, consult respecting what can be done for you. I do not think she needs to be confined, Marquis: her dread of starving, poor sinful wretch, will induce her to remain at Hilton."

“ I make no doubt it will ; and as, like you, Sir, I hope she will sincerely repent of her crimes, we will allow her enough to prevent her from committing others, to provide for her wants. You may therefore return home, and we will see you again, when we have settled how you ought to proceed respecting your daughter.”

She was extremely thankful for the permission, and would have made a thousand promises, and entered into any engagements they required ; but as they had many things to talk over, and many arrangements to make, they soon dismissed her, rather pleased, upon the whole, at having escaped so well, and convinced she had nothing farther to fear, from people who still allowed her to be at large.

CHAP. IX.

THE Marquis, being once more left alone with Lady William and Mr. Langhton, proposed sending Donald off immediately to apprise the Earl, Dr. Campbell, who had entered no less warmly into Julianos's interests, and the latter, of the recent events. He would write three lines to each, and refer them to the bearer for particulars, resolving to remain at the Priory till they arrived, as he wished to introduce his brother to these nearer relatives; and he perceived Mr. Langhton almost dreaded being left merely surrounded by servants, while the monks and Francisco remained his inmates.

Being

Being therefore provided with materials, he wrote a very short letter to the gentlemen already mentioned, deputing Dr. Campbell to inform the General, Zara, and Rosalie, of the late wonderful occurrences, and requesting the Earl would bring his brother down immediately, and assist them with his advice respecting the three culprits. To Juliano, or Algernon, he wrote a still shorter epistle, referring him to Dr. Campbell and Donald for every explanation, as the former was to prepare his mind to bear with equanimity the wonderful change which had taken place in his prospects.

Donald was ready to set off before his Lord had closed his dispatches, being as eager to impart as he could be to transmit, the intelligence to his friends. Ashton was no less anxious to see the real Mr. Albany; but, in common with all the other servants, he was desired not to mention the recent occurrences without the walls, at least till the prisoners were disposed of, who were finally all three secured in the Father's apartment;

apartment, where they were to remain till the Earl's arrival, who would doubtless, in conjunction with our hero, be able to procure them passports to leave the kingdom, as they had both only to apply to ministers, to have any favours, of so trifling a nature, immediately granted.

Jane Killarney, Mr. Langhton proposed sending to Ireland, after she had been to fetch her daughter, as he would provide for their immediate wants; and if the girl behaved well, he might make some permanent provision for her after a time. As for her brother, they all felt a degree of pity for him, though they all agreed that they had frequently been ashamed of him; and Mr. Langhton feared that he had inherited the vile propensities of his wicked father, and that he had not improved under the tuition of the wretched Belthorpe, who had certainly meant to make his own fortune, by bringing about a match between him and his daughter, which he perhaps hoped would have met the Father's approbation,

approbation, whom he resolved should read Jane's confession, which Ashton had taken down, that he might see he had also been duped, by nearly as great a villain as himself. But as he was resolved to provide for the in some respects unfortunate Benedict, he applied to the Marquis for advice, promising that he should object to his ever again becoming his inmate.

"He must, of course, be allowed to fix his abode where he pleases," said our hero.

"Dr. Campbell will, I am convinced, take upon him to inform him how (owing to his father's crimes) he is situated; and he will, I make no doubt, from time to time, look in upon him, or write to him. It were to be wished he could board in some well-regulated family, who were likely to work a reform in his morals. Such will doubtless be the Doctor's advice. Therefore, if you agree to allow him a hundred pounds a-quarter, I think he will be handsomely provided for, at least as a single man."

Mr.

Mr. Langhton thought half the money would be a sufficient provision.

“Then you shall settle only two hundred a-year upon him,” replied the Marquis, “and I will give him as much more, that poverty may not tempt him to act wrong; and we ought to consider, that he has been brought up in idleness, and is too old to learn any trade, or to apply with success to any business.”

“Your Lordship has brought me over to your opinion,” replied the really worthy, but often mistaken, Mr. Langhton.—“I will settle four hundred a-year upon him.”

Lady William looked her approbation of his intention; and at the usual hour they were summoned to dinner, during which, Mr. Langhton reverted to the disagreeable predicament he and the family should be in, till they were provided with a chaplain.

An emigrant priest might easily be met with, our hero conceived, who would do the duty till he could suit himself with one whom he might approve of for an inmate;
strongly

strongly advising his applying to some English Catholic noble to recommend one, as there was more levity than would suit him among the French, too much treachery and duplicity among the Italians, and too much bigotry and superstition among the Spanish and Portuguese.

Mr. Langhton agreed to the truth of these remarks, resolving to apply immediately to some of the English priests of the Catholic church, and to send for an emigrant priest, who resided at Preston, the next day, to spend a month with him.

This point being settled, and dinner being over, Lady William, who thought our hero looked fatigued, and who knew he had not closed his eyes the night before, prevailed upon him to lie down upon a sofa in her dressing-room, and endeavour to take a nap, as he objected to going to bed.

Scarcely, however, had she left him, in hopes he would soon fall asleep, ere an express arrived from Dr. Campbell, which had been sent forward from Highwood. Of course,

course, she was obliged to inform him of the circumstance, presenting him with the letter which had thus disturbed him.

“What can have occurred, to have induced the Doctor to send an express after me!” he exclaimed, jumping up, “as he must be in hourly expectation of my return?” hastily breaking the seal of his epistle, which was dated Umfreville Lodge, and ran as follows :

“I AM sorry to inform your Lordship, that General Umfreville was seized with a most alarming fit, the morning after you left London, and continues in so dangerous a state, that, by his desire, I dispatch these few lines, to request your immediate return to London, as he has many things of importance to communicate to you, and to confer with you upon. I have therefore dispatched this express, since I much doubt his living many days; and his physicians dare

dare not insure his life for many hours. Miss Umfreville and Miss Albany are very well. The former is, of course, much distressed; and both are, like myself, all impatience to see your Lordship; whom I hope will believe that I am your most obedient, &c. &c. ANDREW CAMPBELL."

Starting upon his feet, - the Marquis said he must proceed immediately to Highwood, where his carriage and servants were, as he would not for worlds disappoint the General's expectations.

A horse was therefore immediately, by his desire, saddled for him; and having taken a hasty leave of Mr. Langhton and Lady William, who could not attempt to oppose his departure, situated as he was with respect to Miss Umfreville, he galloped to Highwood, where he gave every necessary order respecting Gordon's funeral, &c. while his chaise was preparing, which

which being soon ready, he set out upon his return, his servants taking it in turn to ride post, and to have horses ready for him; and as he met with no delays upon the road, he rather expected to have overtaken Donald before he reached London; but that faithful fellow being all anxiety to impart the joyful tidings to his favourite Juliano, kept the lead, and arrived in Portland-place nearly three hours before his Lord reached the General's villa; who, by driving thither before he went home, missed meeting his uncle and brother. He durst not, however, venture to call in Portland-place, for fear the least delay should render his hasty journey of no avail. He therefore reached the villa between seven and eight in the evening of the day after he had left the Priory.

Rosalie gave him the meeting, and informed him the General was still alive, and more impatient than ever to see him; nay, had it in contemplation to dispatch another express in search of him. Dr. Campbell

was

was gone to town, to give him the meeting in Arlington-street, in case, as might have been supposed, he had driven thither first.

“ Then I am very glad I came on hither without stopping, my dear girl. But let Zara know I am arrived.”

She hastened to obey his commands, and soon returned, with the physician, whom the Nabob chose should always remain in the house, as it may be supposed he was not sparing of expence, when his own ease, gratification, nay even life, was concerned ; and she had very prudently first communicated her brother's arrival to Dr. ———, who told our hero that the General continued in very great danger, though it was possible he might linger a few days longer ; but it was much more probable that he would not be alive at this hour on the morrow ; entering into a few details respecting his complaint, which convinced the Marquis he had done right in not delaying his journey ; and as the physician
thought

thought the sooner he saw his patient, the better, he hastened to prepare the sick man to receive him, the Marquis following him to the door of his apartment.

The lovely Zara was seated by the bedside, holding one of his hands. Mrs. Glover was stationed on the other, and certainly appeared to be in great distress. Rosalie remained in the dressing-room, as the physician had taken upon him to announce our hero, whose name seemed to rouse the almost dormant faculties of the dying Nabob, who requested he might see him immediately, for fear his strength should completely fail him, before he had imparted his last wishes to him.

The Marquis instantly advanced, Mrs. Glover making way for him; but he approached on Zara's side, who rose to receive him, smiling through her tears, and thanking him, in a low voice, for the haste he had made, to oblige her father, whose other hand he now took, expressing his
regret

regret at finding him so much worse than when he had left him.

“ Bless God, I have been permitted to see you once more, Marquis,” faintly ejaculated the dying man, looking alternately at him and his daughter, and feebly pressing their respective hands.

Our hero, who was really very much shocked, endeavoured to express his feelings upon the melancholy occasion, and his regret at having been absent when he was taken ill ; though he had infinite reason to rejoice he had visited Lancashire, since he had terminated the business he went upon, very much to his satisfaction, and had had the good fortune to render Mr. Langhton a very essential service.

“ Then I am very glad you left London,” resumed the Nabob ; “ since, had you been in town, you could not have warded off the blow, which has entirely broke up my constitution, as I feel I have not many hours to live. Of course, I am very anxious to settle

settle all my worldly concerns ; and to your care and protection I wish to commit my daughter. You sought her in marriage—”

“ I did, my dear Sir,” interrupted our hero ; “ and I shall receive her hand as the greatest blessing you can confer upon me.”

“ Then take it,” said he, joining their hands as they stood. “ I only hope she bestows it with as much pleasure as I do ; and may the Almighty shower down his blessings upon you both ! I now feel myself comparatively happy, to what I was before you arrived ; yet I am not quite satisfied—I could wish—” fixing his languid eyes upon the Marquis, who requested he would only point out how he could gratify any and every wish he could form—“ Do not fancy I doubt your honour, my dear fellow, or your attachment to my poor girl ; still, as my demise will of course oblige you to postpone your marriage, I shall fancy I shall leave my daughter very unprotected, if I

do not see her irrevocably united to you before I breathe my last."

"You shall have that satisfaction, my dear Sir, as I hope my dear Zara will not object to obliging you, under the present circumstances."

The lovely girl could only reply by returning the pressure of the hand she held, as her heart was too full to allow her to speak; but as she made a motion to retire, her scarcely less affected lover supported her into the dressing-room, where he resigned her to the care of Rosalie, while he returned to the bedside, as the Nabob, in evident perturbation, was crying out, "Does she object to my wishes?"

"By no means, my dear Sir; but you must consider what her present feelings are, and how impossible it is for her to give utterance to the consent she has favoured me with. I will therefore hasten to town, except you wish me to spend the night by your bedside, and request Dr. Campbell

Campbell will immediately procure a special licence, that you may bestow my beloved Zara upon me as early as possible to-morrow morning. With your leave, he shall unite us, as I am convinced it will be with heartfelt satisfaction."

"He is an excellent man—I have already had the benefit of his prayers. But do not let me detain you a moment longer, Marquis, as I trust you will return hither the moment you are in possession of the licence. Should I be much worse than I now am, you shall be sent for, but not else, as I wish to confer with my lawyer, and that you should dedicate the night to repose. In case, however, we should not meet again, give me your word that you will make my daughter your wife to-morrow morning, even admitting I have breathed my last. I shall sign my will to-night in that persuasion."

"You safely may, Sir, as I solemnly promise to fulfil your injunction; but I hope you will bestow my Zara upon me,

and that I shall find you rather better than worse in the morning."

"You may find me alive, Marquis; but no alteration for the better is to be expected. Let me therefore once more bless you both, and hear Zara promise to conform to all my wishes."

The Marquis went in search of her; and he blessed them both very fervently, including Rosalie in his kind wishes, to whom he was very much attached. He then dismissed them all three, desiring his daughter and Rosalie would endeavour to get some rest, and that the Marquis would hasten to London, as the sooner he was upon the road thither, the sooner he should expect to see him again.

Therefore, having taken a very tender leave of his beloved Zara, our hero set out for London, and drove, of course, into Arlington-street, where he found Dr. Campbell, in conversation with Donald. Neither of them had expected him for some hours; they were therefore still more
astonished

astonished when they understood he had been at Umfreville Lodge. Having briefly recapitulated all that had passed there, the Doctor undertook to procure a licence; in as short a time as could be devoted to such a purpose, setting out immediately, leaving Donald to inform his Lord of what had occurred since his arrival in town, having merely told him that the Earl and his brother were on the road to the Priory.

The valet entered into various details, having first proceeded into Portland-place, where he found the Earl, who had been apprized of the General's danger, debating with Lady Winifred about the propriety of dispatching a second express in search of the Marquis. His Lordship was, as may be supposed, extremely rejoiced when he learnt what had brought Donald to town, and how completely the Father had been unmasked. He sent him off, however, into Arlington-street, the moment he had told his story, desiring he would proceed with the Doctor immediately into Wells-street,

as he should call for his nephew there, as soon as he could get ready to leave town, which he hoped to do in less than an hour; and while Donald proceeded to rejoice the Doctor with the intelligence he had brought, the Earl, while his travelling-chaise was getting ready, briefly informed the Countess and Lady Winifred, having previously dismissed Lord Dunluce and Miss Albany, of the late wonderful discovery which had taken place at the Priory.

Their satisfaction fully equalled his; and so impatient were both the Ladies to see their much-wronged relative, that they accompanied the Earl into Wells-street, where they found Dr. Campbell, who had, with his accustomed caution, informed the supposed Julianos who he was, and how the discovery had been brought about. To find himself the brother of Lord Endermay, rendered him nearly frantic with joy; a violent burst of tears rather calmed his transports; and he declared his impatience to be upon the road, to receive the blessing of
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of a mother, whom he had been taught to revere, and of his worthy grandfather, whom he easily believed had been completely the friar's dupe. But the idea of seeing his beloved brother seemed most to rejoice him; as he felt that he should always give the preference to him, since to him he was solely indebted for the favourable change which had taken place in his circumstances.

Donald, who was no less an enthusiast with respect to his master, dwelt very forcibly upon the recent events, while assisting him to dress and prepare for his journey; and, to his great joy, he was quite ready when the Earl and the Ladies arrived; and it may be supposed he felt extremely flattered to find himself even joyfully acknowledged by Lady Winifred Albany, who pronounced him the living image of his deceased father; and would have entered into a thousand details, and have asked him a thousand questions, if the Earl had not hurried him away, though he felt sincerely

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grieved.

grieved when he learnt that his adored brother was probably on his return to town.

Our hero was very sorry they had not met, as he was no less warmly attached to him; but feeling very much fatigued, and rather unwell, he retired almost immediately, giving orders to be called, should the General send for him during the night; and, at all events, at seven in the morning, at which hour he hoped the Doctor (who had promised to let the Countess and Lady Winifred know of his return that evening) would be in possession of the licence; and as he was so fortunate, he accompanied Donald to his Lord's bedside, at the appointed time, who, with no small effort, roused himself from his pillow, as he was extremely unwell, and had not been able to close his eyes for more than a quarter of an hour at a time during the whole night. Resolved, however, not to disappoint either the General or his beloved daughter, he endeavoured to shake off the lassitude and languor

languor which hung about him, and persisted, in answer to the Doctor and Donald's anxious inquiries, to declare he was very well, merely a little fatigued; and with the former immediately proceeded to the Lodge, where, to his great joy, Lady Algernon and Lady Winifred, as had been agreed upon between them and the Doctor the overnight, gave him the meeting, wishing to support the fair bride, by their presence, through the trying occurrences of the day.

The General had what might be deemed a very tolerable night, and was in much better spirits than when the Marquis had taken leave of him the evening before. Having greeted our hero with every kind expression, he desired his lawyer to read over the settlements, which were ready for signing; and the Marquis and Zara having affixed their names to them, he was supported in bed to do the same; he had signed his will the night before; and having with difficulty added his name to the settle-

ments, he said, "Thank God, I have been allowed to settle all my affairs. I have only now, Marquis, to wish you and my daughter joy, and then no matter how soon I am called away."

The Ladies were therefore summoned, and the good Doctor, with due solemnity, united his beloved young friend to the amiable feeling Zara. When all was over, he requested the Doctor would join him in a fervent prayer for their future happiness. He next embraced and again blessed them, saying, "Now, oh Lord! thy will be done. Though I fear I have proved myself an unprofitable steward, and I know I have, with justice, been deemed a tyrant, therefore, how dare I hope for that mercy I have denied others?"

Putting out his hand to his son-in-law—"You will prove a far better husband than I ever did, and, I am convinced, a much better father. May your children inherit your joint virtues, and they will prove a real comfort to you. But I see I distress
you,

you, and you do not look well, my dear fellow. Your wish to oblige me has made you regardless of your own health. I hope you will be better after breakfast, when I will see you again."

And having severally addressed every one present, and expressed his thanks to the Countess and Lady Winifred, who had given proofs of their feeling, the party left him, to the care of Mrs. Glover and his valet, and adjourned to breakfast, which was very elegantly set out in one of the lower apartments.

The bride had made the same remarks her father had done respecting our hero's looks, as his eyes were heavy, and he seemed hardly able to bear up against a head-ach, which he acknowledged oppressed him, and which he attributed to anxiety and want of rest. The attending physician was, however, convinced that he was seriously ill, as he perceived he was unable to eat any of the delicacies that had been provided for the occasion, though he seemed ex-

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ceeding thirsty; and having advised him not to force his appetite, he requested to speak with him in the next room, as soon as breakfast was over; and after feeling his pulse, assured him it would be the height of imprudence to endeavour to bear up any longer against the fever which hung over him, strongly advising his retiring immediately to bed, inquiring in what he supposed his complaint originated?

Our hero did not affect to deny he was rather unwell, acknowledging that, two nights before, through necessity in some respects, he had lain for near two hours upon a marble pavement, in a damp chapel, at Langhton Priory, which, added to his having travelled all the next night, had, he believed, disordered him. Still he could not bear the idea of retiring to bed before noon on his wedding-day; requesting the Doctor would give him something to raise his spirits, till a rather more seasonable hour.

“ I should be sorry to alarm your Lord-
ship,

ship, but, upon my honour, I believe you will bring on a very severe fit of illness, if you do not take care in time."

While they were thus debating the point, the two other physicians who attended the General arrived. They were shewn into the room to which the Marquis and Dr. R—— had retired, who, having given in his report respecting the Nabob, candidly told them what had just passed between him and the Marquis; and they both having also felt his pulse, and asked him several questions, seriously advised his retiring to bed.

He excused himself, under the plea that the General might wish to see him, and what excuse could they make for his non-appearance? If they told the truth, they would distress him, and might embitter the short remnant of his life. He was, besides, very unwilling to have his beloved Zara alarmed.

At last, however, the medical gentlemen agreed to inform the Nabob that the Marquis

quis stood greatly in need of rest, taking upon themselves to make him insist upon his retiring.

When, however, they reached the sick-room, and inquired of Mrs. Glover, and Freeman his valet, who were seated on either side the bed, how their patient did, they assured them that he was in a very comfortable doze, and had not moved for the last half hour. Upon approaching the bed, and putting by the curtain, they were convinced he was indeed very quiet, as he had gone off without even a struggle, probably when they supposed he had fallen asleep, which they told the astonished valet, and sorrowing Mrs. Glover, before they returned to the Marquis to give in their report.

CHAP. X.

OUR hero was not very much surprised or shocked, when he learnt the Nabob was no more ; nor did he affect great sorrow for a man whom he had frequently been tempted to despise, and who had, as he justly acknowledged, tyrannized in the most arbitrary manner over a very amiable wife and daughter. He was, however, happy that he had lived to see his Zara and him united, as it had certainly greatly contributed to his comfort in his last moments.

Having sent for Dr. Campbell, he imparted the intelligence to him, requesting he would send Zara to him, as he should
chuse

chuse to break the melancholy occurrence to her, and that he would then make the General's death known to the Countess, Lady Winifred, and Rosalie, with whom he should send the Marchioness to town, as he believed he must, in compliance with Dr. R——'s advice, return home as speedily as possible, and retire to bed.

The Doctor strongly urged his doing so. Suffice it, therefore, to say, that less than an hour after the General had breathed his last, the three Ladies and the sorrowful bride, proceeded to London, and to Portland-place, the Marquis staying behind with the Doctor, to give every necessary order, the Marchioness was told; which having done very hastily, he returned into Arlington-street, promising to send the Doctor, who took charge of all the keys, to read the General's will the next morning.

Dr. R—— accompanied our hero to town, and did not leave him till he had seen him in bed, and given him a draught, which he hoped would rather check the progress.

progress of the fever he was already labouring under.

Donald, who had not been an equal sufferer with his Lord, took his station by his bedside, as did Dr. Campbell, who had promised the Countess to call in Portland-place in the evening, where she had resolved the bride should remain, if the Marquis was not better, who unfortunately was even delirious before dusk, and who was pronounced to be in an ardent fever, when the three physicians visited him, by appointment, in the evening.

With this melancholy report the Doctor was obliged to go into Portland-place. The Countess was extremely alarmed, but made very light of the matter to the even more apprehensive Zara, and no less grieved Rosalie, placing the Marquis's illness to the score of anxiety and fatigue, and prognosticating that he would be much better next day; till when, she thought the Marchioness had better remain in Portland-place, promising to accompany her very early into
Arlington-

Arlington-street, to see how her Lord did, and where she would leave her, if he was well enough to do the honours of his house. And, by way of diverting her and Rosalie from dwelling upon his illness, she briefly and feelingly related Julianò's story, not omitting the last wicked attempt of Father Benedetto, which had certainly accelerated the discovery of what he had so long endeavoured to conceal.

While she was thus assisted by Lady Winifred, who proved a very able auxiliary, trying to beguile the time, and interesting Zará and Rosalie for the real Algernon, the Doctor returned to his pupil, who passed a dreadful night, and was pronounced to be in imminent danger by his three physicians, at an early hour in the morning. The Doctor was ready to execrate Father Benedetto, and to almost regret that his beloved friend had thus endangered his own life, to save that of Mr. Langhton. As it was, however, impossible to conceal his situation, he wrote three lines to the
Countess.

Countess, who had sent, at a very early hour, to know how he was, requesting she would bring the Marchioness and Rosalie into Arlington-street, as the Marquis had frequently called for both during his delirium, as the physicians wished them to be near him, should he ask for them during any lucid interval. Besides, as he was obliged to go to the Lodge, he wished her Ladyship would remain near his Lordship during his absence, for fear, with the best intentions in the world, Donald or the housekeeper should give him anything improper, or likely to aggravate his disorder.

The Countess required no pressing to take upon her the office the Doctor had assigned her; and, with proper caution, she imparted his real situation to her young companions, exhorting them to exert all their fortitude, and expressing the greatest hope that the Marquis's youth, natural good constitution, and the skill of his medical attendants, would bring him through.

Sincerely did they join in the hope,
and

and willingly would either have laid down their lives to preserve one far dearer to them; and, had they been suffered to do it, they would have taken their station by his bedside, and never have left their post while he remained in danger. An experienced nurse, recommended by Dr. R——, having superseded the housekeeper, they were obliged to content themselves with her's and Donald's reports, which they both endeavoured to render as favourable as circumstances would admit. The nurse, in particular, who was a sensible well-informed woman, greatly cheered their spirits, by her consoling prognostics.

Rosalie thought it, however, necessary to write an exact account of her elder brother's situation to her mother, declaring, that much as she rejoiced at the recent discovery, she would ever grieve, should Father Benedetto's wicked plot prove, as there was but too much reason to apprehend, fatal to the Marquis, whom she feared her friend would not long survive; requesting a speedy-

answer.

answer from the Priory, and that her grandfather, whom she congratulated in the most feeling manner upon his recent narrow escape, would join his prayers to those of all the family, for the Marquis's speedy recovery.

Lady Winifred was not less grieved ; and as she chose to spend the day in Arlington-street, she suffered Miss Albany to dine in St. Mary Axe, upon her promising, in the most solemn manner, to return home at an early hour in the evening, and not to make any future engagements, as she was resolved to return into Lancashire as soon as the Marquis was pronounced out of danger. And, by way of enlivening Lord Derwent, who was confined to his dressing-room with the gout, she looked in upon him in her way to Arlington-street, to inform him of his grandson's situation ; and though this selfish old man seldom grieved for the death, much less the illness, of any of his relatives, he was really shocked when he learnt the dangerous situation of our hero. The
General's

General's death he had heard of, having sent, as usual, to inquire after his health; nor was he unacquainted with the Marquis's recent marriage, whom he sincerely hoped would recover, he told Lady Winifred, for his wife's sake.

"She would be a very sincere mourner for his loss, brother," was the reply; "which is more than many fashionable wives would be, upon a similar occasion."

The Marquis understood her meaning; nor was it misconstrued by his better half, who over-acted her part, Lady Winifred told the Countess, while endeavouring to convince her lord and master that she should grieve for his demise.

Meanwhile, Dr. Campbell, though never in a more unfit frame of mind to do business, proceeded to Umfreville Lodge, the Marquis having appeared very anxious, before illness incapacitated him from expressing his wishes, to have the General's will read as speedily as possible, in case he had given any directions in it respecting his funeral.

Funeral. Mrs. Glover, who had remained at the Lodge, had expressed no less impatience to hear the contents of the will, that the orders of the deceased might be strictly adhered to, she said; when, in fact, she was merely anxious to learn how she was left.

The General's solicitor, having been appointed to meet the Doctor, was in waiting; and Mrs. Glover having shed a flood of tears, in honour of the deceased, and grieved with all due decorum, when she learnt the dangerous situation of the Marquis, readily summoned the valet and house-steward to hear the will read, which had not been executed many hours before Miss Umfreville's marriage, and by which he constituted the Marquis of Endermay (in case, as he made no doubt of his so doing, he married his daughter the ensuing morning) his sole heir and sole executor; and by a codicil, which was added after the marriage-ceremony had been performed, and

and which he signed after the Marquis had withdrawn, he fully confirmed this his last will, again appointing the Right Honourable Malcolm Albany Montrose, Marquis of Endermay, Earl of Montrose, &c. &c. husband of his beloved daughter Zara Montrose, his sole heir and sole executor.

To Mrs. Glover he left five hundred pounds, to be paid her within a month after his decease, and two hundred a-year for life—much less than she had expected; to judge from her looks; indeed, she could not help exclaiming, “That such a paltry bequest was a very poor return for her services.”

“You ought to have made your own terms with the General, Madam,” replied the Doctor, “since, in my opinion, the services of few governesses are better requited.”

“If I had not hoped to have been placed upon a very different footing, when we arrived in England, Sir, I would never have
left

left India. There I might have married well, had not my foolish regard for the General marred my fortune."

"These are matters do not concern me, Madam, nor am I in a frame of mind to talk upon indifferent subjects; therefore suffer Mr. Hanway to conclude the will, as I am in haste to return to town."

She made no reply; and had not curiosity detained her, she would have left the room, so great was her rage and disappointment.

To every member of the Albany family he left a hundred pounds for a ring, and five thousand pounds to Rosalie, as a small token of his esteem. This occasioned fresh exclamations from Mrs. Glover, who was convinced that she should have been left an equal sum, if it had not been for the Marquis of Endermay, who had merely married Miss Umfreville to secure the General's fortune to himself and family.

The Doctor disdained to make any reply; and as the General had also left him five hundred pounds, she congratulated

him upon having superseded her in his esteem.

To Freeman his valet he left a hundred pounds, and an annuity of fifty pounds; and a year's wages and mourning to all his other servants; requesting that the Indians who accompanied him home might be sent back, if they objected to remaining in England.

Freeman and the house-steward were perfectly satisfied, and both agreed that the General had acted very generously.

He had given no particular orders respecting his funeral, having merely requested that he might be conveyed to his family-seat.

Mr. Hanway, therefore, by the Doctor's desire, undertook to give all the necessary orders; and the servants were informed, that every thing would, for the present, remain *in statu quo*.

The Doctor then sent to inform Mrs. Glover, who had left the room while he was giving his orders, that he was going back

back into Arlington-street; therefore, if she had any message to send to Lady Endermay, he would be the bearer of it.

“None—she was obliged to him—though he might, if he chose, inform her Ladyship that she knew who she might thank for having been so slenderly provided for; she should, however, leave the villa immediately, well convinced that her late pupil’s ingratitude towards her would not go unpunished.”

The Doctor merely returned for answer, “That he was not quite so much her enemy as to heed what she now said; though he thought, if ingratitude was likely to be punished, she had something to fear upon that score.”

He then set out for London, where he learnt, to his infinite regret, that the Marquis still continued insensible of the presence of his friends, and that neither bleeding nor blistering had as yet had any effect in mitigating the violence of his disorder, which had been coming on from

the time he left Langhton Priory ; and his hasty journey had greatly encreased its virulence.

While, however, Zara and Rosalie were stationary in his dressing-room, from which they seldom stirred, and the Countess and Lady Winifred were continually either coming or sending into Arlington-street, the Earl and his nephew reached the Priory, on the second morning after their departure from town ; wondering at not having met the Marquis upon the road, and rather expecting, in consequence of not having seen him, that he was still in the country, though something very extraordinary must have occurred, the Earl was convinced, to have induced him to delay returning to town, after he learnt the General's situation.

Ashton, who was all impatience to see the real Mr. Albany, as he styled Juliano, was at the carriage-door the moment it stopped ; and from him the Earl learnt when our hero had left the Priory, which
led

led him to suppose they must either have taken different roads, or that they had crossed each other after dusk, on the evening they had left town. Hoping, however, that he had found the General alive, he alighted, and was followed by his companion, whom Ashton pronounced to be the living image of the late Lord William, declaring, that had he met him by chance, he should have thought the same.

“Why, I did not know you had ever seen my brother,” said the Earl—“he was never received at the Priory.”

“True, my Lord; but he contrived to get within the walls once, in disguise. Poor old Gordon brought him; and though I did not know him at the time, I soon guessed who he was, when we learnt with whom our young lady was gone off. And I am sure your dear mother, Sir, will be no less struck with the resemblance; but, if I might venture to advise, you would go in

first, my Lord, for fear, though she is in hourly expectation of him, that the sight of this young gentleman should prove too much for her."

And as his Lordship perceived his nephew was also greatly agitated, he left him in the hall, while he proceeded into the oriel parlour, where Mr. Langhton, Lady William, and the Abbe de Vignis, (an emigrant priest, who had really been recommended to the old gentleman, when he came into Lancashire, by the Bishop of St. Pol de Leon, but who had been purposely kept at a distance by the Padre and Belthorpe, and had, in consequence, taken up his abode at Preston, from whence he had been sent for the day before), were sitting. Lady William started up the moment she caught sight of the Earl, exclaiming, "Has not my son accompanied you, my Lord?"

"He has, my dear sister, and he is as anxious to embrace his mother as you can be to see him; but I wished to prepare
you

you and Mr. Langhton, whom I sincerely congratulate upon his recent narrow escape, for his reception."

"Is he in the house?" asked the impatient mother.

"Shew him in, my good friend," said the Earl, turning to Ashton, who had remained with the door in his hand, and now went in search of the fine youth he had left in the hall; who being very fashionably dressed, and having both recovered his health and flesh since his departure from the Priory, had never looked better (the Earl's valet having assisted at his toilette in the morning) than when he presented himself before his expecting relations, towards whom the gratified Earl now led him.

Lady William could, like Ashton, have exclaimed, "He is the living image of his father," had she been able to speak; but, starting forward with wild animation, she threw herself into his arms, almost con-

ceiving that she was again enfolded in those of her lamented Lord.

Mr. Langhton, who remained standing within a few paces of his overjoyed daughter, was the first to break the general silence, by exclaiming, " I need not have been told that that fine youth was an Albany, even had we met by chance, as I can perceive the family-likeness he bears his brother and sister, and even to your Lordship; and I can also trace a resemblance to our family, in his expressive countenance."

The moment, therefore, his daughter slackened her embrace, he caught him to his bosom, and cordially welcomed him as his grandson, and heir to the Priory; while the rather recovered Lady William, taking a picture of his father out of her pocket, put it into the old gentleman's hands, saying, " Did you ever see so striking a likeness, Sir? I am sure, if I had been fortunate enough to see this dear fellow while he

was

was confined within these walls, I should have accused the Father of the deception he has since acknowledged he put upon us:" adding, " I hope, after a time, I shall feel more charitably inclined towards him: at present, I can only rejoice that he is suffering the penalty of his crimes in this world ;" ordering breakfast for the Earl and her son, who had not yet taken that meal, she understood.

While it was bringing in, having received the compliments and congratulations of the Abbe, who had, of course, been informed of the recent occurrences at the Priory, Algernon, who was looking round him, said, he could almost fancy himself in the monastery he had so long inhabited in Italy ; which induced his grandfather to address him in that language, which was much more familiar to him than English ; though he was perfectly competent to hold a conversation in the latter ; yet he had still much to learn, he observed.

Mr. Langhton naturally reverted from convents to religion, rejoicing that his dear grandson had been brought up a Catholic. Now, what this in many respects worthy bigot deemed the true faith, had greatly fallen in the estimation of his newly-discovered grandson, who had nevertheless, in consequence of the Earl's prudent representations during their journey, agreed to profess the Catholic faith, at least while his grandfather lived ; since it would render the old man's latter years completely miserable, were he to entertain any doubts respecting his successor's salvation ; he might, besides, be tempted to leave great part of his personals to religious purposes, perhaps for masses to be said for his conversion ; at all events, policy as well as duty, ought to induce him, like Henry the Fourth of France, to conform to his grandfather's creed.

Algernon agreed that his uncle was in the right, though he could not help observing, that he had always thought Sully
more

more to be admired for never having changed his religion, than Henry ought to be for having embraced the Catholic faith.

“ He did it to reconcile his subjects, and to put an end to the effusion of blood which was likely to be spilt in the civil wars; and James the Second of England, you know, was, like Mr. Langhton, so convinced that he should risk his salvation, by abjuring his errors, that he abdicated his crown, rather than comply with the wishes of his subjects.”

“ Agreed, Sir; but no one thought him so great a man as Henry the Fourth of France; and his religion was like Father Benedetto’s—it did not prohibit murder.”

The Earl had therefore been both amused and edified by his nephew’s reasoning respecting religion, and was sincerely rejoiced to hear him coincide in point of sentiment with Mr. Langhton, though he spoke his opinion very freely respecting religion; and observed, that no one could

doubt the purity of his brother's principles, or the excellence of that creed which had taught him to risk his own life in defence of another's, and to succour the innocent and oppressed, merely through a motive of benevolence, since he could be actuated by no other, when he assisted him to escape from thence, as he must suppose him a natural son, if not a relation, of the Father's, whom he had no intention of exposing or bringing to shame, had he been perfectly candid in the first instance.

Mr. Langhton readily agreed that such Protestants as Lord Endermay, must be considered as exceptions to the general rule.

Fearful the Earl might feel offended, Lady William turned the conversation upon the prisoners, who were still in confinement, she told the Earl and her son, and probably very anxious to learn their doom.

“ I should suppose so,” replied the former; “ and I think, with Mr. Langhton,
the

the sooner they leave the kingdom the better. To-morrow we shall doubtless hear from my elder nephew, who was of that opinion, I understand; and if he cannot immediately join us here, I will return to town, as between us we shall certainly be able to procure the necessary passports for their going where they chuse: so long as they do but leave England, no matter whither they bend their steps."

"It cannot concern us," rejoined Lady William.—"Shall you have any objection to see the wretched beings, my dear son?"

"Surely not, Ma'am. Indeed I was once extremely fond of the Prior, and, till he betrayed me into the hands of the Father, I think his conduct towards me was both liberal and praiseworthy; and he might hope I should be no less well treated by my reputed parent. At all events, as his bringing me to England certainly paved the way to my being thus kindly acknow-

ledged by you and my grandfather, I sincerely forgive him, and feel sorry that he will continue a dependant upon a much greater rogue, Father Benedetto ; since, if there was the shadow of an excuse for his promoting his son's interest, at my expence, what can be urged in defence of his last base plot ? To me, he appears no less criminal than I should be, were I to plan my beloved brother's death. His accomplices were completely in his power, and he could silence their scruples by the all-powerful influence of gold ; therefore, they are innocent when compared to him."

" Your arguments are very conclusive, my dear boy," said Mr. Langhton ; " still, I hope I forgive the Father's last base attempt, as I am much less inclined to pardon his deception respecting you and his son. However, as they have been promised a conditional pardon, the sooner they leave England the better, since

no

no one can or ever will venture to dispute your legitimacy, my dear Algernon."

"That is impossible, my good Sir," rejoined the Earl; "therefore, the sooner you are rid of the wretches the better, though I am fearful they must remain your inmates, till proper passports can be procured for them; and we must point out to them the risk they will run, should they ever again shew their faces in England. Let us therefore hear whither they intend to go, as it is agreed to allow them freedom of choice."

Ashton was therefore sent in quest of the three prisoners, who soon followed him into the parlour. The Prior entered first; and though not prepared to see his former pupil, he instantly recognised him, and, running towards him, fell upon his knees, imploring his forgiveness. Algernon, who had for years loved him as a father, sprang forward, and, having raised him, mingled his tears with those of the real penitent he embraced,

embraced, and whose forgiveness, as far as his crimes concerned himself, he most sincerely pronounced.

“I am undeserving of your lenity, my dear young friend,” replied the wretched man; “nor will I exculpate myself, at the expence of perhaps a greater criminal,” glancing his eyes towards the Father, “though he certainly grossly deceived me respecting your birth.”

“That has been proved beyond a doubt,” rejoined the Earl; “and we are all inclined to believe, much as you have erred, that you are the least culpable of the three; we wish you, however, once more to declare that this is the youth whom you brought with you from Milan, and who was sent over to you, when an infant, by the Padre Benedetto?”

The Prior did so, with the most solemn asseverations, merely requesting to be allowed to retire to Spain or Portugal, where, in some convent, of a stricter order than his own, he might expiate, by a life of self-denial,

denial, mortification, and sincere repentance, his manifold sins.

“Your wishes shall be complied with, Mordini,” was the reply, “for they are those of a true penitent.—Now, Father Benedetto, please also to acknowledge, that that youth is my late brother’s son?”

He did so, with many entreaties for mercy, requesting that he might be allowed to embark for America, since, in his opinion, it was, after England, the only fit country to live in.

“You have, of course, no wish to expiate your sins by a life of seclusion. However, your wishes shall be complied with; only remember, should you ever dare to return to England, you shall be tried for your life.”

The old wretch promised never again to encroach upon their goodness; inquiring, in a very humble tone, what would be the fate of his unfortunate son?

“He is not to suffer for your guilt, much as he has erred—Let that suffice. If you chuse
to

to appropriate any of your savings to his use, well and good ; they shall be faithfully transmitted to him ; and let me advise you to share the rest between the Prior and Francisco."

The Prior requested to be excused receiving any of his money ; he should trust to the gentlemen's generosity for being sent, free of expence, to Cadiz, where he had a relation, who would doubtless procure him admission into a convent of Carmelites, among whom he was resolved to end his days.

" I rejoice to see such proofs of your sincere repentance," cried Mr. Langhton. " I will undertake henceforth to provide for all your wants ; nor shall you again be confined with two villains upon principle, I am of opinion. However, to America they shall go ; and may their ill-gotten riches afford them a maintenance ! I will not deprive them of them, for fear absolute want should render them still more depraved than they are already."

" You

“ You are very considerate, Sir,” replied the Earl. “ However, they may retire. When I have obtained their passports, they shall be sent off to Liverpool, with a proper escort ; and there they may embark for the place of their destination.”

“ And previous to your departure,” added Mr. Langhton, looking at the Father, “ your keys shall be returned to you, but not before. See them to the vaulta, Ashton, and then return for the Prior, whom you may accommodate with Mr. Belthorpe’s apartment, where perhaps the Abbe will be so obliging as to visit him, and pray with him.”

Even while he was speaking, the Padre and Francisco slunk out of the room. The agitated Prior again advanced towards his pupil, and would have expressed his gratitude for the favour he met with, if utterance had not been denied him. He could therefore only press Algernon’s hands to his lips ; and, having bowed with due reverence to all present, he retired with
Ashton,

Ashton, who had delivered over his other prisoners to the coachman, and who took care that he should have everything comfortable in his new apartment, out of compliment to his young master, who he saw had a regard for the poor wretch.

Meanwhile, Mr. Langhton was lamenting the depravity of human nature, and wondering what Belthorpe and his pupil would do and say, when apprized of the recent wonderful occurrences.

“The one will repent of his sins, I hope,” said the Earl; “and the other will find no great difficulty in conforming to his circumstances, I should suppose. But when we hear from Endermay, which I dare say we shall do to-morrow, we shall probably learn some tidings of them; and we may then send Jane Killarney in search of her daughter. My nephew’s letter will enable us to decide how to proceed; and till it arrives, or he returns, I shall remain your inmate, Sir.”

Mr. Langhton declared nothing could be
more

more agreeable to him ; and the day passed off very well.

Algernon entered into various details respecting his past life, and readily accompanied his grandfather to vespers in the evening, that he might return his thanks, where they were most due, for having been thus fully reinstated in his rights. But very transitory was his joy, as Rosalie's letter, which she had written to Lady William, when informed of our hero's danger, and one of the same date from Dr. Campbell to the Earl, which arrived the next day but one, rendered him completely miserable. Indeed, it would be difficult to say which of the party, the Abbe excepted, felt the most upon this melancholy occasion, as both Algernon and Mr. Langhton accused themselves of being the primary cause of the Marquis's sufferings.

The latter, of course, did not object to his grandson's earnest wish to return to town with his uncle, as he was half frantic when he suffered himself to dread that his
brother

brother might fall a victim to the Father's perfidy. Mr. Langhton merely hoped neither him nor the Earl would endanger their own health by rapid travelling, though he agreed their impatience was very natural. And in the course of two hours after the news of our hero's dangerous situation had reached the Priory, the uncle and almost despairing nephew were upon the road to town, having promised to dispatch an express to Lady William, the moment they could give her any certain intelligence respecting our hero.

CHAP. XI.

LITTLE or no alteration had taken place in the situation of our hero since the letters had been dispatched to the Priory, and his physicians still considered him in great danger when the Earl and Algernon arrived in town.

To the great disappointment of the latter, they drove first into Portland-place, where they merely found Lord Dunluce, who certainly was extremely sorry for his cousin, and was not sparing of his execrations when talking of Father Benedetto, and congratulating the real Algernon upon being restored to his rank in society; but

but the feeling youth could hardly listen with common politeness to him, as he felt nothing like joy respecting the recent events, when informed that the Marquis was still in great danger, and appeared so impatient to see him, that the Earl proceeded with him almost immediately into Arlington-street, where they were received by the Countess, who was grieved to inform them, that as yet no favourable symptoms had appeared to induce the physicians to give them any hopes, though the Marquis had had a few lucid intervals, during which Zara and Rosalie had never left him, and she really believed that they had neither of them enjoyed an hour's rest since his illness; declaring, that it was with the utmost difficulty she could induce them to take sufficient nourishment to support nature.

By way, however, of breaking in upon their sorrow, the Countess went to them and told them who was arrived.

Zara

Zara begged to be excused seeing even so near a relation, till her mind was more at ease; but Rosalie, who had formed the highest opinion of this unknown brother, went down to bid him welcome, though, like him, she could not rejoice at their meeting, while the Marquis, to whom they were indebted for it, continued in danger. Still she felt immediately interested for the real Algernon, whose wonderful likeness to their father she could not sufficiently admire, as it had certainly paved the way to all the subsequent events. Nor was he less struck with the elegant *naïve* Rosalie, who, having inquired for her mother and grandfather, reverted, with streaming eyes, to their brother's situation, whom she still hoped would recover, as his nurse always cheered the Marchioness and her with more favourable prognostics than the medical men ever held forth; and adding, "Your representative, as we call the supposed Algernon, has been here every day,

as he does not yet know that he is not an Albany; and I should really feel much more pity for him, if he had evinced rather more regard for our beloved Malcolm; but he has taken it into his head, very erroneously, that he would have been his heir had he died; and he has, in consequence, displayed the depravity of his disposition to several of the servants, who, though they as yet suppose him their Lord's brother, have been half inclined, I understand, to shut the door in his face. As for me, I have not seen him, nor has the Countess. For his own sake, I wish he had acted the hypocrite, though it lessens the regret I did feel at his having been brought up with such great expectations."

"If the acquisition of a dukedom, and the first estate in Europe, could have consoled him for the loss of such a brother, he is indeed unworthy of such a relative," replied Algernon, who, in compliance with his

his earnest entreaty, was permitted to take his station by his brother's bedside in the evening.

The Marquis was not sensible of his attention, nor aware of his heartfelt grief; but before morning the hopes of all those immediately about him were very much revived, as, even contrary to his nurse's expectations, he fell into a profound sleep, from which he awoke at the expiration of five hours, very much refreshed, and perfectly sensible.

Dr. R——, who had, as usual, called at a very early hour, was waiting the event in his dressing-room, having already cheered the ladies' spirits, by assuring them that he had now great hopes of his patient's recovery.

Upon looking round him, the first person our hero caught sight of was his brother, to whom he instantly extended his hand, saying, "My dear Juliano, how are you?"

The gratified youth would have replied, but a flood of tears effectually checked his utterance.

“Come, come, do not distress yourself, man; I shall be very well in a few days. Have not you been at the Priory? My head is strangely confused.”

Dr. R—— now interfered, requesting the invalid would endeavour to compose himself—he must not talk at present.

“Well, only suffer me, Doctor, to see my two guardian angels, who have so often hovered over me, when I have been unable to address them, and I will not speak another word, after I have told them I am better.”

“Mr. Albany shall tell them so, my Lord, and that, if you will be ruled, I will be answerable for your recovery; but I must enforce quiet and silence.”

“I will neither move nor speak, without your leave, Doctor, if you will but suffer me to see those dear girls. I know they will not
credit

credit any report you may send them ; they must have ocular demonstration that I am better, before they can believe it."

The Doctor did not chuse to oppose his wishes, promising to go in search of the ladies, as soon as he had taken a draught Mrs. Nurse now presented him, declaring she had always told the sweet young ladies his Lordship would do well.

We shall not attempt to describe the meeting between the new-married couple, who were for a few minutes suffered to remain *tête-à-tête*. Suffice it to say, that Zara had almost forgot the recent loss she had sustained, while in dread for her beloved Malcolm's life ; and when assured that there were great hopes of his recovery, her joy effectually precluded her from reverting to the melancholy past.

Algernon and Rosalie were next admitted, and then the scarcely less anxious Earl and Countess.

Dr. Campbell and Donald had merely left the room upon the entrance of Lady

Endermay ; but as the Doctor strictly enforced silence and repose, the Marquis was soon left to the care of the nurse and his faithful Donald, while the now happy family congratulated themselves and each other upon his visible amendment, and upon the Doctor's assurances, that except he had a relapse, which it should be his care to guard against, he would pronounce him absolutely out of danger, though his convalescence would probably be rather tedious, they had been obliged to bring him so low, to abate the violence of his fever. The time of year was, however, all in his Lordship's favour; and as he must be allowed plenty of air, and was extremely well situated in that respect, and under the care of an excellent nurse and most affectionate relatives, he hoped in a month to set him once more upon his feet.

The other physicians, who always paid their first visit in Arlington-street, soon arrived; and having seen their patient, confirmed

confirmed all Dr. R—— had said; and departed, rejoicing in having rendered a whole family completely happy.

The Marquis of Derwent, who always sent twice a-day to make inquiries, was not among the least pleased; and Lady Winifred spent the day in Arlington-street, and this time brought Miss Albany with her, whom she hoped would captivate her handsome Catholic cousin, for whom she already felt the greatest regard.

For the first time since her beloved Lord's illness, Zara now asked after Mrs. Glover, and was not very much surprised when she learnt that she had left the villa in a pet, and had not thought fit either to send or call to inquire after Lord Endermay, as she was well assured that she had never felt any regard for her, and had been extremely disappointed in never having been asked to accompany the General to the altar.

Lady Winifred was only surprised at her want of policy; and the Countess thought

she had acted very right in throwing off the mask at once, as Lady Endermay would have felt obliged to have afforded her some countenance, had she behaved more prudently.

Algernon was, during this debate, telling his sister, for whom he already felt the greatest affection, what had passed at the Priory during his stay there, and entering into various details respecting his escape from thence; which encreased the regard Rosalie had ever felt for our hero; to whom Dr. Campbell related, at intervals, and in as few words as possible, everything that had occurred since he had been taken ill; merely adding, that Lord Algernon meant immediately to apply for passports for the three prisoners, and to make the necessary communications to the supposed Algernon and guilty Belthorpe, having already sent a proper person in search of Mordini and Jane Killarney, as he meant to send the former off in the first packet that sailed for Lisbon, from whence he
must

must proceed to Cadiz, and to desire the other would see and endeavour to persuade her daughter to return with her to Ireland.

The Marquis, who was not allowed to enter into conversation, signified his entire approbation of his uncle's intentions; and was no less pleased to hear he proposed sending Donald's brother down with the passports, as he would take charge of the two greatest culprits, accompany them to Liverpool, and see them safe on board the first vessel which sailed for America; and the sooner they left England the better, he thought; reflecting with infinite pleasure upon the sincere regard his beloved brother had evinced for him, who spent the evening by his bedside, and felt happier, now assured of Malcolm's being out of danger, than when informed he was an Albany, since his brother would in some respects have died a martyr to his regard for him.

Algernon, or rather Benédict, called in

Arlington-street between seven and eight, and was even impertinently clamorous to be admitted to see the invalid, as it had struck him that he was probably no more, and that he was purposely kept in ignorance of his demise.

The porter made no reply to his impudent speeches, neither caring for nor understanding his threats, as he knew that even had his Lord died, his real brother would not have been his heir, much less the person who was addressing him, whose history he had learned from Donald since Mr. Albany's arrival.

In consequence, however, of the Earl's orders, the young gentleman was shewn into the library, where he was soon joined by that nobleman and Dr. Campbell; to whom, before he made any inquiries respecting the invalid, he began to complain of the behaviour of the porter and other servants, who had always refused him admittance even into the hall, as if they had taken him for a thief.

“ Quiet had been so strictly enforced by my nephew’s physicians, that I cannot blame his servants for having refused to admit you within the door, since, in my opinion, you were more actuated by curiosity than feeling in your inquiries. As I have much to say to you, I ordered you to be let in; and as I do not wish to keep you in suspense, let me first ask you whether you are really married to Pauline de La Tour?”

“ What, has my brother told you I am?” inquired the startled youth.—“ If he has, he is a mean fellow, for he promised to keep the secret. But I suppose he wished to lower me in grandfather’s esteem, as Rosalie is his favourite. She won’t, however, come in for the estate, with all his mischief-making; and I can raise money for my present wants, if he has prejudiced the old man against me, though I dare say the Father will stand my friend.”

“ You are wandering very strangely from the very simple question I asked

you, young man," resumed the Earl, in a haughty tone; "but as I presume, from what you have said, that you are married to the unfortunate girl, and with the connivance of Mr. Belthorpe, I am sorry to inform you that you have formed not only an imprudent but a criminal connexion, as Pauline and yourself are the children of the same mother."

The youth looked aghast; but soon recovering his wonted assurance, he cried, "What, has my mother acknowledged herself a wanton, or has she been twice married? However, I was not to blame for marrying my sister; as I was kept in ignorance of the relationship, the sin must fall upon my mother—no one can blame me."

"You are innocent, when compared to your wretched father and mother," replied the Earl, who now entered into all those details which the reader is already acquainted with, and which effectually crushed the aspiring hopes of the person he was addressing,

addressing, who called down vengeance upon the head of his guilty parents, declaring, that it was very hard he should suffer for their sins.

“ It is not intended you should, as the real Algernon Albany and his sister mean to present you with five hundred pounds a-piece.”

This was a fact, as Rosalie had resolved to appropriate that sum to him out of her recent legacy ; and Algernon, who had been amply supplied with cash both by his grandfather and mother, had given a similar sum for his use to his uncle ; who thus proceeded :

“ In addition to which, Mr. Langhton means to allow you four hundred a-year. For your own sake, I hope you will make a proper use of his bounty, to which is of course annexed the condition, that you never again see Pauline Killarney.”

Benedict swore he never would, and made fifty other promises in a breath.

“ Your future actions will convince us
of

of your sincerity; and as we do not wish to throw you in the way of temptation, you may, if you like it, take possession, for the present, of the lodgings my much-wronged nephew has so lately vacated. Dr. Campbell will be so obliging as to wait upon Mr. Belthorpe, to demand your clothes, &c.; and we will settle respecting the annuity in the course of a short time. Meanwhile, here is the first quarter in advance, to provide for your present wants; and the thousand pounds I mentioned to you shall be paid into your hands, as soon as Pauline, to whom you may write, telling her you cannot see her for a few days, and her mother have left town. I shall not insist upon your dropping all connexion with Mr. Belthorpe; but as you now know how he has led you on to be guilty of a dreadful crime, in his anxiety to make his daughter's fortune, I leave it to you to form your own determination. If you desire it, he shall be kept in ignorance of your abode; but if you do not
mean

mean entirely to break with him, it will be useless."

Benedict promised to be entirely guided by his Lordship's advice, well convinced that it would be most to his interest; and soon departed with Dr. Campbell, who, having left him in Wells-street, proceeded to his former lodgings, where he found Mr. Belthorpe rather anxiously expecting the return of his son-in-law.

Not feeling inclined to shew the guilty being any mercy, he immediately entered upon the purport of his errand, presenting the trembling wretch with Jane Killarney's confession, and telling him that he ought to feel himself extremely indebted to the Langhton and Albany families, for suffering him to remain at large, since his having bribed some one to make away with Father Benedetto was so clearly proved, that they might have had him taken up for that criminal attempt. He was, however, at liberty to retire wherever he chose. His daughter would be provided for, as well as her

her mother, admitting she had no further intercourse with him. If she ever had, Mr. Langhton's bounty would be withdrawn; desiring him to deliver up all his late pupil's effects to the person he should send for them, and to pay their lodgings up to the present time; his salary had, he understood, been paid up to Lady-Day; therefore, he would still have cash in hand to answer every emergency; and to enable him to seek a private retreat, recommended to him to follow Mordini's example.

He would reflect upon his advice, he told the Doctor, promising to conform in every respect to his wishes, and never again to see or write to Jane or his daughter; like Benedict, endeavouring to shift the blame off his own shoulders upon those of the equally guilty Jane, as he should never have thought of promoting incest.

The Doctor did not suppose he would; and soon departed, having told Donald's brother to call the next morning for his lodger's

lodger's effects, who was to give him a note to his late tutor.

Our hero had a good night, and was in consequence, after seeing his wife and sister, informed of what had been done the preceding evening by Dr. Campbell; as the Earl was gone to the alien office, to procure the passports for the Father and Francisco, having had no difficulty in obtaining one for Mordini, who was expected in town that evening with Jane Killarney.

Our hero was diverted at the idea of Benedict's having expected to be his heir; but as a proof that he forgave his having doubtless wished for his death, he declared his intention of doubling his brother and sister's donation to him, as he thought him entitled to, if not absolutely deserving of, his pity.

Donald's brother called at an early hour in Fludyer-street, where he found his lodger's trunks ready packed, and received a bill for the two gentlemen's board and lodging for

for the last month, Belthorpe, who had departed at four in the morning for the Priory, the people of the house supposed, having told them Mr. Albany would settle with them. Alick did not chuse to do so ; therefore came into Arlington-street for farther orders.

The Countess, who was with Zara and Rosalie, was highly amused, telling Algeron, who had been sent for out of the sick-room, that Belthorpe was a complete rascal, and had finished in style. He, however, took upon himself to pay what was required, sending his friend Alick back with the money ; who having taken a coach, soon returned into Wells-street with his new lodger's baggage, who found, to his cost, that Belthorpe had made free with the few valuables he possessed, which so enraged him, that, had it been at his option, he would have shewn him no mercy.

The Earl, meanwhile, having procured the required passports, sent Alick off that very evening

evening in the mail to Manchester, well aware how impatient Mr. Langhton was to be rid of his vile inmates.

Dr. Campbell had taken upon him to write the old gentleman a full detail of all the recent occurrences; and Algernon and Rosalie also seized the opportunity to address both him and her mother; the latter informing them what the General had left her, and how she had already disposed of a part of his handsome legacy; requesting her mother would send up a ring of her own and one of her grandfather's, as they were both to have one in memory of the Nabob; whose funeral took place on the tenth day after his demise, or rather whose remains left the villa in a hearse and six, decorated with plumes, scutcheons, &c. and all the paraphernalia pride or luxury can invent, followed by three coaches and six, his own carriage bringing up the rear, for his seat in Scotland.

As on the same day our hero was allowed, for the first time, to leave his bed for an hour,

hour, the lovely Zara, who had not been informed when the mournful procession was to set out, could only rejoice that he had been spared to her ardent prayers; indeed, no one could absolutely grieve for the General's demise and as he had seen his daughter married to the man upon whom he had long intended to bestow her and his fortune, every member of the Albany family thought he had lived long enough, as they had feared he would have been a great restraint upon the young couple, who were now freed for ever from his caprices and unreasonable demands.

CHAP. XII.

OUR hero continued to mend very rapidly, even faster than his medical attendants had hoped, from the time the General's funeral procession left London. Dr. R—— therefore told him they should soon send him into the country. Fearing, however, that Umfreville Lodge might renew his Zara's sorrow for her rigid father, he had resolved to dispose of it; but previously took an opportunity of asking her, as she seldom left the side of his sofa, and exerted all her talents to amuse and entertain him, in conjunction with Algernon and Rosalie, “ Whether she
had

had any particular predilection for this said villa?"

"None in the world," she assured him, "since it would always remind her of a very melancholy event, and of his recent illness."

"Then we will dispose of it, my dear girl," was the reply, "and purchase another, where we will go as soon as the Doctor will give me leave;" having one in his eye, which was situated at Richmond, and was upon a larger scale than Umfreville Lodge, nor had any pains been spared upon the fitting up and interior decoration. The grounds had been laid out by the most celebrated landscape-gardener in England; and he knew it was ready for their immediate reception, his attorney having mentioned it to him a few days before he left town, regretting it had not been on sale when the General purchased his.

Dr. Campbell was therefore requested to transmit the Marquis's orders upon this occasion to Mr. Barnes, who was to look out for a purchaser

purchaser for Umfreville Lodge. He soon executed his first commission, and proper servants were sent down to take possession of this newly-acquired mansion, of which both the Earl and Countess, who had been to see it, spoke in the highest terms.

While, however, this business was going forward, Mordini and Jane Killarney, having arrived in town, had, each having done their business in London, proceeded the one to Lisbon, amply supplied with cash, the other to Ireland, with the truly penitent Pauline, upon whom Mr. Langhton had settled fifty pounds a-year. Our hero had settled an equal sum upon her more guilty mother, which he meant to continue to the daughter, if her conduct met his approbation.

Alick had also safely reached the Priory, when, having delivered the letters he brought, he proceeded the next day to Liverpool, where he engaged a passage in an American vessel for the Father and Francisco; and as the captain proposed sailing

sailing in three days, he hastened back in quest of his prisoners, who, at a very early hour, and by the private door, left the Priory, without even expressing a wish to see Mr. Langhton, or making any inquiries respecting Benedict, Pauline, or Belthorpe, and carrying with them all the Father's ill-acquired hoards. To Alick's great joy, the vessel was upon the point of sailing when they reached Liverpool; therefore, having seen them on board, and under way, he returned once more to the ancient pile, to give in his report; and having been very handsomely rewarded for his trouble, he soon set out for London, bringing letters to Algernon and Rosalie, the Earl and Marquis; Mr. Langhton giving the two former leave to remain with their elder brother till he brought them home, which they requested he and Lady Endermay would do; Lady William hinting in her's, that the oriel chamber, and several other apartments, were new furnishing, under her inspection; and also informing her children, that the tutelary Catholic

Bishop,

Bishop, residing at ———, had recommended, according to his account, a very pleasant amiable Englishman, as their domestic chaplain, whom they expected at the Friory in the course of the ensuing week; till when the Abbe des Vignis was to continue their inmate; concluding with a very polite well-worded message to the young Marchioness, expressive of her impatience to see her; nor had she omitted to address Lady Winifred, who having heard from our hero, as soon as he was competent to talk upon business, how he had proceeded at Highwood, and all Gordon had said, suffered herself to be persuaded to remain in town till the Marquis and his bride removed to Richmond; nay, even agreed to spend a few days there prior to her departure.

Lord Dunluce, who continued, unknown to his family, to bow at the shrine of Charlotte Melbourne, whom he frequently met in public, would fain have introduced Algernon Albany to some of his gay com-

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panions, not daring to endeavour to reform his dress, or to treat him with the same degree of familiarity he had done his predecessor. Algernon politely, but positively declined his offers, devoting his whole time to his brother and newly-acquired sisters. He had been, of course, introduced to his paternal grandfather, who declared himself as proud of him as he had been ashamed of the impostor; regretting, to Lord Algernon, his being a Catholic, as he was convinced he would have made a figure in Parliament. He was still confined with the gout, though it was suspected he rather exaggerated his complaints, since they afforded him an excuse for remaining at home, and for confining his young wife, who never ventured to leave him, except to pay her respects in Arlington-street, or to take a short morning and evening walk, for the benefit of her health. It might therefore have been presumed she would have chosen the Park for her stroll; but she preferred walking in St. James's-street or Pall Mall. She was, of course,

course, always attended by a footman ; but as her suspicious husband conceived that he might easily be bribed to say and do just as his Lady pleased, his confidential valet, by his desire, engaged a trusty female spy, unknown to the Marchioness, who was always at her heels when she went out. Twice had this worthy personage watched her Ladyship into a lace and milliner's shop, in Coventry-street, and she had each time gone up stairs to make her purchases, the footman always remaining in the street. Now, though his Lady certainly had lately laid out a large sum in millinery, and had told him she dealt at the above-mentioned shop, to oblige her mother, the old Marquis took the alarm, and his measures in consequence, which his valet executed very dexterously. Having easily discovered that the milliner let her front room two pair of stairs to a banker's clerk, the very one, in short, who had been so laughed at for having let Lord Dérwent run away with his mistress, and of whom he had certainly

taken ample revenge, since, though the milliner had been very highly bribed by the one party to facilitate their interviews, the lady of course finding the money, she could not withstand the weightier bribe of the valet, who thus obtained ocular proof of his Lady's infidelity to her Lord. We need not add, that the Marquis did not very patiently bear this breach of her marriage-vows. She was immediately sent home to her mother, whose annuity rather consoled her for her daughter's disgrace, as an action in the King's Bench was immediately commenced against the seducer, preparatory to an application for a divorce.

No one was more diverted than Lord Dunluce, by this conclusion of his grandfather's matrimonial venture. From Charlotte Melbourne, in whose father's house the luckless lover was clerk, he learnt that the poor d-v-l had absconded; and from the talkative landlady, who lived near his disgraced grandmother's mama, he learnt that
she

she bitterly deplored having listened to her *quondam* admirer, as her mother and sister amply repaid all her past slights, and all her former acquaintance rejoiced at her downfall, as she had never noticed any of them during her short reign of greatness.

Lady Winifred, it may be supposed, inveighed more than ever against her brother, whom she averred had driven the wretched woman to act wrong, as his absurd condescension had first turned her brain, and finally led to the disgraceful catastrophe; declaring her resolution of returning immediately into the country, as she could not help fancying she participated in Lord Derwent's disgrace and mortification; and Lord Dunluce highly offended her, by his ridiculous remarks upon the amorous turtles. Lady Endermay, however, succeeded in persuading her to remain in town at least till the now convalescent Marquis went to their villa; and she was grown so partial to the lovely Zara, she would not,

she declared, put a negative upon any request of her's.

Umfreville Lodge had been almost immediately disposed of to a very rich merchant, who purchased it as it stood, and took all the furniture, and everything the Marquis chose to dispose of, at a fair valuation; and, to our hero's no small surprise, when he accompanied his solicitor into Arlington-street, to sign and seal, and complete his purchase, he recognised him for the young man, the Mr. Mendez, whom he had seen at the play with Mrs. Salvadore and her daughters, and understood, from his lawyer, that he was going to be married, and had lately abandoned the Synagogue. He mentioned who was the purchaser of the Lodge to Zara and Rosalie, after Mendez and the solicitor were gone, who both rejoiced that his having been of the party to the play had never been mentioned to Lady Winifred, who would doubtless have formed the same suspicions they had done, which were evidently very erroneous.

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As the Marquis now took daily airings, and his strength rapidly encreased, it was resolved that they should leave town for Richmond the ensuing Monday, as Lady Winifred, who, with Miss Albany, were to accompany them down, made no objection to the plan.

The Marquis of Derwent had left town for Derwent Priory, in defiance of the gout, to get out of the way of all his gay friends, who, like his grandsons, were more tempted to laugh at than to condole with him; and certainly the Earl was not sorry that the Derwent estate was thus relieved from the payment of the large jointure he had assigned his wanton bride.

On the Saturday previous to her intended journey to Richmond, Lady Winifred received a very polite note from Mrs. Salvadore, to request that Miss Albany might be permitted to spend a couple of days with her family the ensuing week, as her eldest daughter was to be married on Monday, and wished very much that her sisters

might attend her as bride-maids, promising to call for Miss Albany on the Sunday evening, if her Ladyship had no objection to her joining the wedding-party.

Now, her Ladyship had a very great objection; but as Hannah Albany got all her cousins to plead in her behalf, and even Lord Algernon thought her Ladyship could not refuse so very natural a request, the spinster very reluctantly suffered her to go into St. Mary Axe on the Sunday evening.

On the Monday she went down to Richmond with Algernon and Rosalie, the Marquis and his Zara having taken the lead of them, as they wished to look about them before their guests arrived. They had, therefore, contrary to their first intention, gone down on the Saturday evening; and both were delighted with their abode. Having devoted the Sunday to repose, our hero was in excellent spirits, and he declared quite well, when Lady Winifred and his brother and sister arrived, maintaining
that

that change of air and scene had perfected his cure.

Her Ladyship hoped it soon would, but could not think him quite stout yet; and, like Algernon and Rosalie, she was in raptures with the villa, and resolved not to return any more to London.

Most of the General's suite had been discharged. Some of the Indian servants had expressed a wish to return to India; but two females, who had always been in Zara's suite, would not hear of leaving her.

Mrs. Glover had been paid her legacy by the Marquis's solicitor; and that they might have no farther trouble with her, nor any future intercourse, his Lordship desired him to purchase an annuity of two hundred a-year; whereas, had she behaved with even common decency, upon the General's demise, the bequest he had made her would certainly have been doubled.

At six o'clock, according to promise, the Earl and Countess of Algernon and Lord

Dunluce arrived; the latter of whom had met Benedict Killarney in the morning, who, having received the two thousand pounds which the Marquis, Algernon, and Rosalie, had given him, and a deed securing him four hundred a-year upon the Langhton estate, had immediately left Wells-street; and having formed an acquaintance with a few low bucks, while at Belthorpe's friend's, did not despair of making a good match, and cutting a dash with the best of them, he told his *quondam* cousin. The party could only lament he seemed resolved to make so bad a use of theirs and Mr. Langhton's bounty.

But having spent a very pleasant evening, they retired, at what Lord Dunluce called a horrid early hour, and were talking of taking an airing between one and two the next morning, as the sun was covered in, when a very elegant open landau and four fine horses, followed by three outriders, who, like the postillions, were in new and shewy liveries, and whose hats were decorated

corated with white favours, drove round the sweep, followed by a coach and four, which the astonished party in the breakfast-room knew belonged to Mr. Salvadore. In the landau was Mrs. Salvadore, Lady Winifred's ward, the former's eldest daughter by her present husband, and Mr. Mendez.

"How dare those Jew people take such a liberty," cried the angry Lady Winifred, "as to come here in a tribe, as they go to the Synagogue? Surely they might have sent Hannah home, without bringing all their generation with them. Do not receive them, I request, Marquis."

"Under what plea can I refuse them admission, my dear aunt? Mr. Mendez, who so lately bought Umfreville Lodge, is very much the gentleman, and behaved with the greatest liberality in that business; and as I did not then turn him over to my lawyer, I——"

At this moment the landau drew up to the portico, and Lord Dunluce exclaimed, "I

will bet you any money, cousin, that Miss Albany has changed her name. She is the bride—I know I am right—I saw her ring.”

“The bride!” screamed Lady Winifred, “impossible!—they dare not have played me such a trick.”

Zara and Rosalie looked at each other in silent amaze; our hero thought it very possible; and when the Earl recollected what Mrs. Salvadore had written, he was convinced that she had duped Lady Winifred out of her consent. No one spoke till the groom of the chambers came in with Mrs. Salvadore’s respects to the Marquis of Endermay, whom she requested would grant her a few minutes audience.

“You don’t meant to receive her, I hope, Marquis? since it is evident I have been the dupe and the laughing-stock of the whole tribe—for I cannot doubt Miss Hannah’s being the bride.”

“I certainly do not absolutely approve of Mrs. Salvadore’s conduct, my dear Madam; still,

still, in my own house, I hardly know how to put a negative upon her request—She once bore the name of Albany.”

“And she is my sister-in-law,” interrupted Lord Algernon; “it is, besides, absolutely necessary we should hear what she has to say in her own defence—even you, aunt, must be curious to know how she will excuse her recent conduct.”

“Why, certainly, nephew, I am rather impatient to hear how she will gloss over her shameful deception.”

“Then let us receive her in the saloon, Marquis.”

Orders were given in consequence to the groom of the chambers. Lord Dunluce, who had been reconnoitring the whole party through the transparent painted silk blinds, which were down, run out of the room, winking at Algernon and Rosalie, while Lady Winifred, who had been fanning herself with great violence, advanced to take a peep unseen at the bridal-party; which encreased Mrs. Salvadore’s triumph, whom

whom the Marquis and Earl now joined, having with some difficulty composed their countenances, both having given way to a violent burst of laughter, when out of Lady Winifred's hearing.

Mrs. Salvadore was very well dressed, and certainly looked young of her age. She began by apologising for her intrusion, rejoicing to see Lord Endermay look so much better than she had dared to have expected, and then begged leave to enter into a brief explanation of her recent conduct; and as she was no fool, and had of late mixed among the first circles in the mercantile world, she told her tale with great propriety, beginning by observing, that she had, in the first instance, been duped by her vanity into marrying the least worthy member of the Albany family; still, as the wife of Lord Albertus, she hoped she had done her duty; in return for which he had cruelly deprived her of the guardianship of their only child, to whom she had resolved to devote her future life; and certainly
neither

neither the Marquis of Derwent nor Lady Winifred had tried to soften the pangs she had felt upon being obliged, at a very early age, to part with her infant, since they had absolutely prohibited her ever seeing it again, but by their permission, and had sent the child into Lancashire.

As, however, her daughter grew up, wishing to know whether she had imbibed her guardians' prejudices against her mother, she had addressed her in writing, and a handsome bribe had enabled her to have her letter given into the hands of her dear Hannah, who had soon convinced her that she had the feelings of a daughter towards her ; since which time, they had constantly corresponded, and were, it may be supposed, very anxious to see each other—"At Hackney," she proceeded, "she met Mr. Mendez ; and I should have advised the young people to have waited till Hannah became of age, if I had not wished to convince Lady Winifred that she would have acted with greater policy, had she rendered
me

me her friend, instead of holding me and my second husband, my family and religion, up to ridicule before my child; but as her discourse had the very opposite effect, I merely laughed at her weak malice, and consented to have my daughter and Mr. Mendez asked at church, which they were at his parish and at Marybone, and for the third and last time last Sunday.

— “ My note to Lady Winifred you have probably seen, gentlemen. I certainly stated facts, though, as I expected and hoped, she mistook my meaning. Suffice it to say, that Hannah yesterday gave her hand to Abraham Mendez, who is generally respected on both sides of Temple-Bar, and who even ranks Peers among his acquaintance. — His fortune is immense, and, as a proof, he has settled three thousand a-year jointure upon his wife, and Umfreville, or rather Albany Lodge, which he purchased for that purpose, and her own fortune upon their children, not to mention five hundred pounds a-year pin-money. . . . This he has
wrote

wrote the Marquis of Derwent, who may or may not deliver up his ward's fortune till she becomes of age, since that is of no consequence to the young couple. If Lady Winifred wishes to see them, they are at the door, as they are both anxious to see Lord Endermay, and to congratulate him upon his recovery."

Our hero bowed; and the Earl acknowledged, his father and aunt had not paid that respect they ought to have done to Mrs. Salvadore's feelings, in the first instance—"You have, however, very fully retaliated upon them, my good Madam," he went on; "and perhaps it might have been better had the young people waited till they were of age. Out of respect to my aunt, we must beg leave to decline receiving them here; though, believe me, we—I know I may answer for you, Endermay—shall never shrink from the acquaintance of Mr. and Mrs. Mendez;" to whom our hero sent a very polite message, as the Earl saw Mrs. Salvadore to the carriage, which

which immediately drove off full speed, followed by the coach.

Our hero did not join the ladies till his uncle returned, when they gave in their report. Lord Algernon, not feeling inclined to spare his aunt, frankly recapitulated all Mrs. Salvadore had said, advising her to forgive what was now past recal. She was not so inclined; resolving, on the contrary, never again either to see or speak to the artful hussey, whose clothes should all be sent into St. Mary Axe the next day, and the following she would return to Highwood.

Lord Dunluce, who had returned while she was thus venting her rage, beckoned our hero on one side, and told him he had wished the bride and bridegroom joy, kissed the bride-maids, and fallen desperately in love with Mendez's sister, who was one of them, and the finest creature he had ever seen.

The Marquis paid little attention to his nonsense; and it was finally settled, that the angry Lady Winifred, Algernon, and
Rosalie,

Rosalie, as neither they nor the Marquis wished to take advantage of Mr. Langhton's indulgence, should return into Lancashire the following week, the Earl and Lady Algernon promising to follow the old Lady thither, and our hero to bring his Zara to the Priory in less than six weeks, as he was the more easily inclined to part with his brother and sister now, as he hoped to enjoy their company in Scotland during the autumn.

At the appointed time, therefore, Lady Winifred, who had now resolved to divide her personals between Algernon and Rosalie, and to leave Highwood to Lord Dunluce, left London.

The brothers and sisters parted with sincere regret; but they were so soon to meet again, they consoled themselves with the cheering idea; and as Lady Winifred's departure enabled the Marquis to invite Hannah and her husband to Richmond, they did so; and our hero found Mendez

so much the gentleman, and so well informed, that he resolved to cultivate his acquaintance. His sister, as Lord Dunluce had said, was a very beautiful girl, and had an immense independent fortune. She did not reside with the new-married couple, being under the care of an aunt, who lived at Hackney.

The Earl was no less pleased with Mendez, to whom Lord Derwent immediately paid over his wife's fortune, wishing to provoke his sister, by openly approving of a match he knew she still reprobated in the most vehement terms.

The Marquis being, however, perfectly recovered, and having been advised to try sea-bathing in the autumn, he rather hastened his journey to the Priory, having learnt, from Algernon, that his grandfather seemed breaking very fast, and was very anxious to see him; and certainly, had he been his grandchild, the old gentleman could not have given him a more cordial reception,

reception, repeatedly calling him the preserver of his life, and rejoicing to see him look so well.

Lady William was no less happy ; and as all the best apartments had been new furnished, Zara was very much pleased with the Gothic mansion ; indeed, like her Lord, she was so fond of Rosalie, that she would even have put up with the former accommodations at the Priory, to have enjoyed her company.

Mr. Berrington, the new chaplain, was a man of sense, erudition, and real piety, and a most agreeable companion. He was already the staunch friend of Algernon and Rosalie ; and was, as a Catholic divine, all that Dr. Murray was as a Protestant minister, whom he had formerly known, and whom he often visited. Mr. Langhton's devotion, under his guidance, was become infinitely more rational ; his real piety was no longer obscured by superstition ; and all the household hailed his entrance into the family as the commencement of the real *age of reason.*

reason. Our hero was much pleased with him; and Algernon rejoiced to see his grandfather, though in declining health, happy and cheerful.

The Earl and Lady Algernon soon followed Lord and Lady Endermay into Lancashire; Lord Dunluce having gone upon a pleasurable tour with some gay friends; and the families at Highwood and the Priory were now seldom apart, when an incident occurred, which certainly greatly hurt the Earl, and was therefore deplored by all his relatives, Lady Winifred excepted, as she had long foreseen that Dunluce would commit some folly, and had highly reprobated the Marquis and Earl's having noticed Hannah after her disgraceful marriage, which she averred, and not without some truth, had paved the way to Dunluce's (forgetful of his engagements to Charlotte Melbourne) eloping with Rebecca Mendez; but as it soon appeared that her brother was as much hurt as the Earl felt himself, and that he had been equally kept in ignorance

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norance of the young couple's intentions, his Lordship acquitted him of all blame, and finally forgave the fickle Dunluce, and his really lovely wife, whom he invited to Woodville, very contrary to Lady Winifred's advice, who, having altered her will, gave Highwood to Rosalie, who devoted a great portion of her time to her.

Having, however, spent six weeks at the Priory, our hero and his Zara proceeded into Scotland, Mr. Langhton and every member of his family accompanying him thither, as did Lady Winifred, for fear Dunluce and his Jew wife should intrude upon her privacy; and there we shall take our leave of the whole party, merely observing, that our hero and heroine continued a blessing to each other and to all around them, and that the birth of a son and heir completed their felicity in this sublunary world.

Mr. Langhton did not long survive his return to Langhton Priory, which his daughter

daughter immediately gave up to her beloved son, though she agreed to continue his inmate; and though, notwithstanding Mr. Berrington had convinced him that there were excellent men of the Catholic persuasion, at the expiration of his mourning, having previously publicly abjured his errors, he gave his hand to Dr. Murray's daughter, with the full approbation of all his relatives, and soon after was called upon to represent a neighbouring borough in Parliament.

Much about the same time, Rosalie was united to a Catholic nobleman, to whom Berrington had been private tutor, and whose character he had formed; of course, he was truly deserving such a wife.

Lady Winifred, who never forgave Mrs. Mendez, nor who ever again admitted Lord Dunluce, did not long survive Mr. Langhton, when Highwood fell to the share of Rosalie, and her personals, which were considerable, to Algernon; though neither our hero, his

Zara,

Zara, nor the young Malcolm, were forgotten by this well-meaning, though in many respects mistaken, old Lady. And soon after Algernon and Rosalie had entered the holy pale, the Marquis of Derwent, who had been divorced from his young wife, also paid the debt of nature. His title and estate, of course, devolved to Lord Algernon; but all his personals, and everything he could alienate, he left to Lord Endermay, who made over the whole to Lord Dunluce, who had by this time nearly run through the immense fortune he had received with his wife, and promised to more than vie with his late uncle William, in point of folly and extravagance. The Earl therefore ceased to remonstrate, or to hope he would ever reform; and as he was always treated as a father by his nephews and nieces, he endeavoured to consider them as his only children.

Mr. and Mrs. Mendez were a very happy

couple, as his good sense soon rendered his wife a convert to his way of thinking; and they were visited and esteemed by every branch of the Albany family, who gave Mrs. Salvadore great credit for having made such a prudent choice for her daughter.

Benedict Killarney, having soon got rid of all his ready money, finally disposed of his annuity, and would soon have been in a starving condition, if Mr. Mendez had not sent him out to Jamaica, as clerk to a store belonging to one of his friends, and the yellow-fever acting with particular violence upon his frame, enervated by his continued excesses, he soon fell its victim.

Jane Killarney and her daughter continued to deserve the bounty of the Albany family, which was encreased in proportion to their deserts.

No one ever knew what became of the Father and Francisco, who were landed in
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America, but respecting whom nothing further had transpired; nor was it for a long time known what had become of Belthorpe, till, by mere accident, while making a Welch tour, Lord Dunluce saw him at a village in Pembrokeshire, where he was esteemed one of the finest Methodist preachers that had ever been that circuit; and there we will leave him.

Hoping that we may have amused, if not edified our readers, as we still adhere to our old maxim,—that in works of this nature, poetical justice ought at least to be done to all the characters; though we are well aware, that the good are not always rewarded in this world, nor the bad punished; but it sometimes occurs, indeed, murder is generally discovered, and great crimes are almost always, sooner or later, disclosed, if not by the compunction of the principals, often by their accomplices, or by their too great security; and all works of fiction should hold out some

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moral, or they must be hurtful to those of the rising generation, which we hope our's have never been; and in this confidence now take our leave of the public.

FINIS.

Lane, Darling, and Co. Leadenhall Street.

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